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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

It is interesting to handle another book from the busy pen of 'Nicodemus.' But he remains impersonal, and it is only the 'pen-name' that reveals—to the uninitiated at least—his identity with the author of those poignant books of the last War time, 'Midnight Hour' [1942] and 'Renascence' [1943]. The book now before us is *The Kingdom of the Real*.[1] It is described by the author as 'An Existential Study of the First Phase of the Fourth Gospel' (chs. i.-vi.).

It might be well to recall who 'Nicodemus' is. He is one who, like the ruler of the Jews named in the Fourth Gospel, came to Jesus 'by night,' and learned of Him that 'unless a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.' And when was 'the midnight hour' in which he learned the necessity of the new birth? It was in the summer months of 1941. With the collapse of Europe in the previous summer his personal life-work had collapsed, together with his home and family life; and he knew what has been described as 'that most bitter of all terrors . . . the disintegration of life's good.'

It was for him a subjective as well as an objective disintegration, involving his inner as well as his outer world. He felt that if he were to recover and secure his integrity of soul at least, he must brace himself for some kind of spiritual encounter, even as in the archetypal story Jacob wrestled with the dark and nameless angel. But he learned after a time that if the encounter were only of self with self it was fraught with spiritual danger. To attempt the task of self-integration, of the reintegration of his spiritual good through his own effort alone, would be 'titanism,' a flouting of God and the universe. But, as his journal records, he was by God's grace led patiently and surprisingly, in spite of himself, from the bitter knowledge of utter failure, futility, and frustration to a new vision of the Christian faith and a gradual reintegration of soul, but a reintegration to a pattern not his own, namely, the pattern of the Cross and Resurrection. He learned what it was to die unto life, to be born again.

[1] Lutterworth Press; 15s. net.

He had always been drawn to the Christian faith. Indeed he had gone to Oxford early in the century with a view to ordination; and although there his traditional beliefs had been sapped, he recovered in the course of the years a true interest in Christ and the Church. But now Christianity had become real to him, so real that he would gladly have taken Orders in the national Church in which he had been nurtured. He had in fact been just on the point of taking Orders and entering upon a parochial charge when he was denounced for his doctrine and his ordination refused.

How great was his disappointment may be gathered from this entry in his journal, made shortly before the day fixed for his ordination: 'The long conflict closes; I come home at last to the haven where I would be; the dream of forty years comes true. At last, after all, to be unconditionally Christ's man, able at last to preach Christ crucified, not as a career, not for pay, but for love, to offer the Word of life to all these "hungry sheep," to be God's "person" (not that dreary thing, a "personality"), to bear before His altar the sins and sorrows of one's own family of souls, to abide in His Holy Place (the "Innermost, where the flame is, and the wings are throbbing")—how incredible, how shining a "port after stormie seas!" "Lord, I am not worthy."'

The first-named book, 'Midnight Hour,' is apt to leave the impression that 'Nicodemus' regards 'twice-born' religion, in the sense of violent and catastrophic religion, as the only real religion. Some of his reviewers may have taken him to task on that point. At any rate in 'Renascence' he would correct such an impression. He even goes the length of saying there seems good reason to suppose that the religious life which is placid or even semi-unconscious is more healthy than that which is catastrophic in form.

It will be readily understood how the Fourth Gospel appeals to a man so spiritually minded, especially after the stress and strain of

'conversion' lie behind him and the peace and joy of surrender fall like the gentle dew upon his soul. Nor is it surprising that one who has been influenced by Kierkegaard, and by recent writers who have also come directly or indirectly under Kierkegaard's influence, should find in the current phrase, 'existential,' a key to the study of the Fourth Gospel. But he does well to warn us at the outset of *The Kingdom of the Real* that 'by this much abused and misused term' he means here no more than 'an attempt to read, understand, and record what is seen when this book is read as far as possible without preconceptions and primarily with a view to its correspondence with our own actual life-experience at its fullest intensity and depth.'

One turns with especial interest to the fifth chapter, bearing the title, 'Birth from Beyond' (Jn 3^{1-15}), in which the story of Nicodemus himself occurs. All the chapters are thoughtful and suggestive and are the product of much reflection on a Scripture that because of its 'spirituality, sublimity, and translucency' can be placed 'only in the category of poetry such as that of Dante or William Blake; music such as that of Bach at his best, or Beethoven in his last quartets; painting such as that of Vermeer or El Greco,' but which even in such a company possesses something more. However, we must be content to refer briefly to the fifth chapter. Here, as elsewhere in the book, the exposition moves in quiet and steady flow, with none of the turbulence of 'Midnight Hour.'

Looking upon the writer of the Fourth Gospel as a great creative artist in whose hands the facts which his vision selects from the Christian tradition are all 'Signs,' our author holds that the story of Nicodemus is more than either Jewish history or Gentile allegory; it is universal and symbolic drama. Here, as elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus has a meaning which transcends all previous Hebrew or Hellenistic thought and indeed all His recorded personal claims; so that it can be said that in the inward as in the outward world 'there is a Christ come from Beyond, incarnated in the natural consciousness, yet not of it; an inner "secret self of self," a Life within the life, lifted up, slain, risen, upon whom if the natural man will look he shall live, born again into that Being from Beyond the bournes of nature's life.' A mystical thought; perhaps a true thought.

While there is a constant flow of books dealing with the menace of Communism in the world to-day in one or other of its many aspects, most of them are the expression of the point of view of the individual writer. What is specially interesting about *The Report of the Church of Scotland Commission on Communism* [1] is that it is the product of an official Church Commission, and that it is issued by the authority of that Church's supreme court, the General Assembly. Here then, we may take it, is an official Christian verdict on Communism as it actually operates, and, still more important, here are specific suggestions as to what form the Church's response to the challenge of Communism should take. So far as we are aware, the Church of Scotland is the only Church that has set up a Commission specifically to deal with Communism. The members of the Commission were carefully chosen, and the Convener of it is the Rev. G. M. Dryburgh. This is its first Report to be published, and it is hoped to follow it up by others.

Much of the Report, designed as it is for the general reader, follows a familiar enough path. The material contained in the chapters headed Actual Communism, The Emergence of Communism, and Why People become Communists, while freshly presented and attractively summarised, will yield little with which readers of this magazine are not already fully abreast. At the same time the Report does well to reaffirm the fact that 'Communism, as we know it to-day, sweeping across the nations with its militant atheism and its belief in economic determinism as the driving power of history, could not flourish in an age marked by strong religious conviction as to the supremacy of the supernatural and belief in the standards of life and thought based on the Christian Faith.' It is also pointed out that contemporary Communism is the natural result of factors increasingly operative in the life of Western society in the last three centuries.

Where the Commission's Report is specially valuable, and where fresh ground is broken, is in the chapter that defines the Challenge of Communism to the Church, and outlines the nature of the Church's Response. Here the Commission is speaking to all the churches, and all may profit by what is set down. For example, it is stated that Communism must be both resisted and learned from, and the position is illustrated by considering the Marxist theory that morality is class-conditioned, and therefore all moral standards relative. Here Communism and Christianity are in head-on opposition. But let it be noted that it is not difficult for the Marxist to adduce instances where 'standards of social and political conduct exhibited a bias in favour of the interests

[1] Church of Scotland Publications; 2s. 6d. net.

of what happened to be the dominant social groups of the time ' and even more readily he can point to instances where the outlook and behaviour of individuals, including Christians, were quite definitely so conditioned. That is to say, the challenge is, on occasion, one that the Christian must accept in all humility as ' something that may be for him a Word of God.' The Report very nobly goes on to say that ' the Christian, above all others, should recognise how subtle are the temptations that spring from the sinful heart, how easily he rationalises his own interests, how strong is the hold of conventional assumptions upon his mind.' The balance of the Report, and the fairness of the Commission in coming to its judgment, this last sentence fittingly reveals.

In considering the challenge that is presented by Communism to the Church, the Commission emphasises the fact that it means considering also the challenge which the modern world as such offers to the faith. Communism only presents that challenge ' in a form as it were writ large and displayed with startling and brutal clarity.' What, then, ought to be the nature of the Church's response ? In one sentence it is summarized : *The response of the Church can only be to seek to become more truly the Church.*

The Church's task lies both in the realm of thought and in that of action, and primacy is very rightly given in the Report to what is demanded in the realm of thought. ' Intellectual perplexity constitutes a most effective hindrance to faith in the circumstances of the present day.' ' The leaders of thought in the Church are living in a different world from so many of the ordinary members, and therefore the guidance which they can offer elicits little support. A striking case in point is the Ecumenical Movement.' Few will dispute the Commission's statement that to a much greater extent God must be served with the mind. Far too many church members are content with a vague emotionalism that is quite unable to stand up to any resolute attack. Worshipping God with the mind was specifically enjoined by our Lord Himself, and the Report does well to stress this fact and to point out its implications for to-day. One possible misunderstanding the Commission foresees. ' What is necessary is a genuine insight into the significance of Christian truth for life, and not a mere learning of theological propositions authoritatively defined.' Four emphases are vital, and these the Report sets down as follows :

(1) What must be developed is a Church theology, a living effort on the part of the Church as a whole to come to a genuinely common mind in its understanding of, and obedience to, God's will for man.

(2) This theology must be soundly based on Scripture.

(3) This effort must be carried out in an Ecumenical setting.

(4) This intellectual service of God must be based upon the recognition that the gospel is for the whole man, and not merely for particular aspects of his being, and therefore the understanding of it must be worked out in relation to the whole area of human interests and concerns.

But the Church's response must also be in the realm of action, first in the ordering of its own structure, and then in the impact which the Church may hope to make on the wider community. Here we could have wished that the Commission had been more specific. Stress is laid on the Church as the whole body of the faithful, and on the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. There are churches, however, that keep on appealing to the laity without ever giving the layman any effective voice in matters concerning either worship or government. This cannot go on, and perhaps that is what is in the mind of the Commission when it pleads for a ' far greater flexibility of organisation and a new willingness to experiment.' Pleas like this we have all heard for a very long time, but nothing ever seems to happen. Phrases like ' flexibility of organisation ' have a delicious sound, but the constitution of the average church is just about as flexible as a steel plate embedded in concrete. Members of Commissions ought to be sworn in, and compelled to give solemn undertaking that they will not use terms that cause needless alarm and despondency because they have first of all to be translated into common speech.

In the realm of politics the Report further calls for action through the development of a Christian criticism of society, and by means of a greater willingness on the part of Christians to serve on public bodies, and in trade unions and professional organisations. It concludes by declaring that ' the essential response that the Church is called upon to make is a certain openness towards God, an openness that finds expression throughout the whole range of human interests and activities.' For a cheap, easily assimilated survey of the meaning of Communism, and of some of the steps that the churches should take over against it, this official Report is to be very highly commended.

Existentialism and the Preacher

An Arrangement of Mirrors

By the Reverend T. Tudor Rhys, B.A., B.D., Hinckley

All is grist that comes to the preacher's mill. But what of this 'modern' doctrine of Existentialism? In so far as there is any truth in it, it must be God's truth and to that extent it is not new. Put in a nutshell, what Existentialism affirms is that 'it is only when man knows or experiences a thing that it really exists. In this way, the whole universe depends for its existence upon man.' Man is therefore 'the centre of the picture.' The modern fashion is to be 'realistic,' to see things and to take things 'as they are.' 'Existence,' therefore, is what passes through the filter of a man's experience. But the question is: What has to happen so that the 'filter' itself can operate? 'Existence' is what is reflected in the mirror of a man's own mind. But the question is: What and how much is involved in the fact that there can be any mirror at all? The test of any doctrine is whether you can preach it or not. Let us try to apply that test.

'What sort of a mirror have you?' was the somewhat equivocal question at the head of a newspaper paragraph some time ago. The writer went on to explain: 'In order to ensure a good reflection the glass must be of good quality. Cheap mirrors are false economy and give a garbled version of one's personality. Take care also that the light shines on your face. You should have three kinds of mirror: an enlarging mirror—the kind which shows up the details of one's countenance, good or bad; a triple mirror—in which one can study one's face from all angles; a full-length mirror—in which one can see oneself from head to foot. This will avoid the necessity (the writer concluded) of stealing a furtive glance at oneself in the shop windows.' In this attempt to give a picture of Existentialism for the preacher I shall adopt and adapt with grateful acknowledgment this arrangement of mirrors. Let us take them in order.

1. **The Enlarging Mirror.** This is the mirror of one's own mind, and the first thing one sees on looking into it is:

(a) *The Privilege of being Oneself.* The Existentialist has the trick of tapping the obvious on the shoulder until it turns round and looks at you, and both Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre are obsessed by the 'contingency of the human being.' Why am I here rather than there? Why now and not at any other time? 'Nobody knows!' Has it ever occurred to you that 'YOU' might never have existed at all; that, instead of its being 'YOU' it might have been somebody else, and that, in that case, so far as 'YOU' are concerned, there would have been just *nothing at all*? What a narrow escape from the fate of non-existence! To put it positively: What a privilege it is to be—Oneself! God's greatest gift to you is that gift of your own self. Wrapped up in that gift of your self there comes to you every other gift. You are looking at a view: mountains piling high on the one side and, across the plain, 'a full-fed river winding slow,' and over yonder the 'innumerable laughter of the sea waves.' And all the wealth and the wonder of that landscape has to pass through the little filter of your own brain! To return to our metaphor: the whole world, the 'choir of heaven and furniture of earth' has to be reflected in the mirror of your own mind. One's 'subjectivity' is the 'glass' (whether tumbler or mirror) 'into which everything is poured.'

That is true also of the spiritual world. We believe that God exists independently of our thoughts about Him. He is, as Anselm said: 'that than which a greater cannot be conceived.' Yet, I myself can never know more of God than can be reflected in the mirror of my own mind. Angelus Silesius gives it a tilt to the left: 'I know that without me God cannot exist for a single second. If I cease to be, He too must necessarily cease to be.' 'God is Subject,' said Kierkegaard a good deal later, 'and therefore exists only for subjectivity in inwardness.' In other words—you can't get more out of a mirror than can be put into it. There is, of course, much more beyond the frame of any mirror than can ever get into it. While you are regarding your face in your looking-glass the cloud-shadows are sliding over Snowdon and ships go their way far out at sea, but nothing of all this appears in your mirror. One of the greatest existentialist passages in literature is Ex 3^{11-18}. The Lord says to His servant Moses: 'Give the people a message from me.' Moses agrees to do so but adds: 'If the people ask me who you are, what name shall I give?' 'And the Lord said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM.' Then follows a significant pause

in the dialogue as if the Lord had noted a look of perplexity on His servant's face. And no wonder. There is infinitely more in that Divine name than the mind of any Moses can ever grasp and ever since then learned men have tried to solve the mystery. God in His essence transcends the range of all human thought. He can only become known to man through His manifestations—in Nature, in history, and through reflections of Himself in the mirror of each man's mind. And then, at the end of the pause, as though to give an instance of the distinction between His 'existence' and His 'essence' He gives His servant His alternative name: 'Tell them the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent Me unto you.' There's more beyond the rim of the mirror than can ever come into it but God is able to find a reflecting medium in every man's mind, and in men one at a time.

(b) *The Responsibility of being Oneself.* Is there another thing we see when we look into this mirror? 'I do not know the truth,' said Kierkegaard, 'except when it becomes life in me.' The most significant instance of God's being able to mirror Himself in a human mind was Jesus, and He practised His sense of responsibility by exercising His gift of choosing. He chose deliberately every step of the way: 'I must be about my Father's business.' 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me.' 'He set his face steadfastly. . . .' In making a decision I am doing something more than selecting one or the other of two alternatives, I am deciding how much of the world comes into existence for me, and how much of God will be revealed through me. 'To him that hath shall be given,' said Jesus. Jean-Paul Sartre was so obsessed by this sense of responsibility as to say: 'My action is a commitment on behalf of all mankind.' And the third thing I see in this mirror is the need for (c) *The Redemption of the Self.* The Existentialist places the emphasis upon the subjective, upon the 'I' who sees, who chooses, who wills, and so on and upon the passion and intensity with which 'I' do so. 'Subjectivity is truth,' said Kierkegaard, and again: 'the conclusions of passion are the only ones that are worthy of faith.' The ultimate sin for the Existentialist is to be impersonal, detached, dispassionate, and objective. It is therefore easy to see where the danger lies. So much emphasis is laid upon the self that there is danger lest there should be too much self. 'Every attempt,' says Berdyaev in his autobiography, *Dream and Reality*, 'at looking at oneself is attended by the dangers of partiality, prejudice, vanity, and pretension. I do not know if, in writing this book, I have succeeded in combining subjectivity with truthfulness.' And one recalls Robertson Nicoll's comment on Robert Buchanan's views of Christianity: 'the lenses were fogged.' The mirror needs to be corrected and cleansed. It needs also to be commandeered and consecrated. Unwelcome intruders may obstruct the view at any time. I sit in the back seat of a car sometimes and the driver says to me: 'Do you mind moving your head? You are getting into my mirror and blocking my view of the road.' Gabriel Marcel speaks of the immediate 'experience of a presence not indicated or conditioned by the subject.' The 'presences' may be such that life is enriched and blessed thereby but there are other possibilities. Have you ever had an experience like this one? You are alone in your room and you happen to look in the mirror. Suddenly you become aware that there is someone looking over your shoulder. Paul knew what kind of 'presence' that might be: 'when I would do good, evil is present with me.' All sorts of presences intrude upon one's vision and take possession of the mirror. It needs to be commandeered and consecrated.

2. **The Triple Mirror.** When you look into an ordinary or 'enlarging' mirror what you see is yourself. There we are concerned with the miracle and mystery of one's own existence. But when we stand before the triple mirror we move in another dimension. The triple mirror is an arrangement of three mirrors by whose help one can see oneself all round, from all angles. It is one in which we see ourselves as others see us, in which I can see myself as though I were somebody else. The triple mirror presupposes the existence of other people. It is a witness to the fact that we are living in a world in which we are being watched. Indeed, we could not exist unless we were under observation from three directions, that of other people, that of ourselves and that of the spiritual world. We live, first of all, under the eyes of:

(a) *Other People.* 'It was the disconcerting habit of a certain large employer,' says *The Times*, 'to ring up members of his staff from time to time to tell them in tones of awful meaning that he was watching them.' Is this attitude symptomatic of the age? This is how a recent story in *The Spectator* opens: '"I've chosen you to do this because I feel you'll do your best at it. Don't let me down." . . . He wrung my hand . . . and as I saluted and left the room I felt his gaze following me inexorably through the door.' This feeling of being looked at has influenced such practical matters as the architecture of our public buildings. One reason why the House of Commons is the shape it is, and why the floor of the House should not be enlarged was suggested by the

Speaker himself. In his evidence to the committee he urged that every member of the House should be 'within range of the Speaker's eye,' for 'if a member is too far away then the Speaker has no control over the proceedings.'

Is this, in its effect, a good thing or a bad thing? Usually, when I think of myself and say 'I,' it means that I fill the rôle of the watcher. From this point of view other people are 'those whom I see.' That attitude is becoming more and more familiar through the spread of television. We are slipping into the habit of looking at the world as a spectacle. But suppose something happens and the tables are turned? Suppose, instead of your watching the world, the world suddenly turned round and began to watch you. Other people would then be 'those who see me.' Is this consciousness of 'being watched' a good thing or a bad thing? It certainly makes a difference. To discover that the eyes of another person are looking at me, says Sartre, is the same thing as if another person had penetrated into the privacy of my being, interfered with my freedom and thrown my whole inner life into confusion. Without this intercommunication of one person with another no person could exist.

This 'being looked at' may have a bad effect. 'I'm not ashamed to own my Lord, or to defend his cause,' says the hymn. No, but there is always the possibility of betrayal. It is easier sometimes to be ashamed of being thought too good than it is of being thought too bad. Under the gaze of other people one naturally seeks their good opinion and prefers not to make a bad impression. That is why being looked at means so often to be levelled down. When Peter was warming himself at the brazier that night in the high priest's courtyard he suddenly felt that somebody was watching him. There was indeed. It was the high priest's maid. 'When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest.' Under the gaze of his Master's enemies Peter lowered his principles to the general level of the moral mediocrity of the onlookers. That is the test and the temptation of the 'existential stare.'

But it has its good effects. It may have a cathartic action like that of a surgical operation. The stare of another may remove the outer coating of custom or pretence until the truth is exposed. In *The Seven Pillars* T. E. Lawrence says that he once went in disguise as a spy to Deraa, then in Turkish occupation. A Turkish officer approached him. Lawrence says: 'He turned, stared at me and said very slowly: "You are a liar."' The hostile stare of another may be stimulating and strengthening. 'And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.' It was under that stare of envy and dread that young David grew up to be the kind of man that God wanted him to be. And centuries later, the best and tenderest life that was ever lived unfolded its existence under the same cold and murderous stare: 'And they watched him whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.' And later: 'And they watched him, and sent forth spies.' And later still: 'And they crucified him and parted his garments . . . and sitting down they watched him there.'

(b) *We live under our own eyes.* An 'individual' by derivation is that which cannot be divided into parts, and psychologists used to stress the organic unity of human personality. But perhaps that would be too simple an account of the matter to-day. Each one of us is a little world in himself and the effect of being stared at by others can be produced within the world of one's own self. Every one, at one time or another, must have felt the shock of suddenly seeing himself as if he were somebody else. Usually I think of myself as 'I,' the subject of my sentences. 'I see, I think, I will' and so on. But one day something happens so that the 'I' jumps out of its place as the subject and becomes the object, the 'it' or the 'him.' I see myself doing something as if it were being done to or by somebody else. T. S. Eliot gives an instance in *The Cocktail Party* of how one may be 'suddenly reduced to the status of an object.'

> When you've dressed for a party
> And are going downstairs, with everything about you
> Arranged to support you in the rôle you have chosen,
> Then sometimes, when you come to the bottom step
> There is one step more than your feet expected
> And you come down with a jolt. Just for a moment
> You have the experience of being an object
> At the mercy of a malevolent staircase.

One may have had a similar experience on an operating table. Here is an instance from a letter of a friend who had recently been very ill: 'I found myself standing by the side of the bed and I saw my body lying there. The nurse in the room came and looked at my body and I heard her say: "Oh dear, I believe she's dead."'

Being stared at by oneself, or seeing oneself 'reduced to the status of an object' has a cleansing effect which may be compared with the sting of salt upon a wound—if applied in time. There is an instance of this in the tragic story of Lot's wife, tragic because the remedy was applied too late to be of any therapeutic value. Gabriel Marcel points out that this is the basic explanation of this strange story. When Lot and his family

were fleeing from Sodom his wife is said to have looked back, with disastrous consequences for herself. Why was she turned into a pillar of salt? What underlies the symbolism here? What did she see, looking back at her through the receding gates of Sodom? She saw herself being stared at—by her own denied desires. So full of chagrin was she at being torn away from her Sodom set that she stood there—petrified with self-pity.

In the New Testament, however, there is the companion story that ended well. The Prodigal was confronted, as was Lot's wife, with the sight of himself reduced to the status of an object, an object of loathing and contempt. And what the Prodigal saw, wallowing there in the pig-swill, was not one of the swine (in that case there would have been no 'double vision') but a son of his father. The vision came to him and he responded while there was yet time. 'And when he came to himself, he said . . . I will arise and go to my father.'

(c) *We live under the gaze of God.* Does it matter to any flower how we look at it? Does it matter to the flowers whether we look at them at all? T. S. Eliot has answered the question:

> for the roses
> Had the look of flowers that are looked at.

We live, not in a dead world but in a living universe and even the flowers are responsive to our awareness of them. Virginia Woolf's book, *The Waves*, opens with an account of what goes on in the minds of little children at school, of their thoughts about themselves, about one another and about their teachers. Here is a little girl's thoughts about her teacher: 'When Miss Lambert passes (said Rhoda) everything changes and becomes luminous. . . . Suppose she saw that daisy, it would change. Wherever she goes, things are changed under her eyes.' Yes, things change 'under our eyes' and because we look at them, else they would not exist. Walter de la Mare has a poem, *Fare Well*, in which he suggests that flowers absorb beauty and vitality through being looked at and loved—

> Since that all things thou wouldst praise
> Beauty took from those who loved them
> In other days.

But is not this mere subjectivism? The flower *is*; but it doesn't 'exist' until I see it. What of those myriads of flowers that grow in remote, inaccessible places where no human eye has ever looked? What a waste, said Job, to cause it to rain on the earth 'where no man is,' and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth in that desert spot! There is no waste. If no human eye ever looks at it, it is looked at and loved, nevertheless:

> The rose that with your earthly eyes you see
> Has flowered in God from all eternity.

'Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.' Existentialism stresses the fact that we all share in a general system of intercommunication and that this 'intersubjectivity' (as Gabriel Marcel calls it) is a condition of our existence. It matters, therefore, how we look and where we look. 'Wherefore,' say the Scriptures, 'seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, . . . let us run . . . looking.'

3. **The Full-length Mirror.** This is the mirror which reflects the object in its entirety—(1) From the cradle to the grave; (2) From generation to generation; and (3) From time to eternity.

(1) *From the Cradle to the Grave.* In this mirror one sees oneself from head to foot, from top to toe. According to Buber, Sartre, Heidegger, Marcel, and others, a situation is 'existential' when one is 'wholly engaged' and their favourite words are 'abandonment,' 'totalness,' 'commitment.' The concept of the 'wholly engaged' is, of course, a Christian one. One day, Jesus 'lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.' But these hardy young fishermen were not paupers. Far from it. In what sense, then, were they 'poor'? In this existential sense. They had exercised their freedom and elected to become poor for Christ's sake and His Kingdom's. They had, as it were, 'burned their boats' so that, if ever they should be tempted through failure or disappointment to leave His service they had no excuses to fall back upon: they had all been wiped out. The Master's cause was now their all. It had become for them a matter of life and death.

The *sign* of existence is *freedom*—freedom to choose, not merely between two alternatives but to choose with such abandon that alternatives, as Paul would have said, have ceased to trouble.

(2) *From Generation to Generation.* The existential unit, as we have seen, is the individual, but never the individual in a vacuum. It is not enough, says Gabriel Marcel, to exist, there must be existence 'in a situation,' that is, in fellowship with other conscious beings. 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' He is the God of each separate individual person. But note the order in which the 'individuals' are arranged. They go from father through son to grandson. Looking into this third, full-length

mirror, we see that the existential unit is now the family, the parents and their children. We shall rue the day when anything happens to disintegrate the family and to interrupt the family succession.

The sphere of existence is fellowship, but not as seen in a static cross-section of society at any moment: that may, and sometimes does, harden into a tyranny in which the individual is a mere cog in a machine. What we have here, and what, by God's grace, we must preserve, is a fellowship of discovery. We live in the world of to-day, but with our eyes on the world of to-morrow, and the line of succession runs through the Christian home and the Christian church 'from generation to generation' to the fulfilment of the purpose of the living God.

(3) *From Time to Eternity.* 'To save a man's life for a few years,' wrote Kierkegaard in his *Journal*, 'is just a joke. The serious thing is to die a blessed death.' That is to say: man is on a longer journey than from the cradle to the grave, from generation to generation; man is on the march from time to eternity. And what makes that transit so terrible and so tragic is the incidence on the way of sin and evil. This 'obstruction' between time and eternity is reflected in the writings of the existentialists by such terms as 'anguish,' 'the absurd,' 'the abyss,' the 'encounter with nothingness.'

Jesus faces the situation and meets it in His two related images of the mountain and the mulberry tree. Let us look at the former. Whenever the ancient Hebrews thought of a huge obstacle which stood in the way of their achieving a desired good they called it a 'mountain.' 'What art thou,' said Zechariah of the tyrant of his time, 'O great mountain?' It is folly, to say the least, to underestimate the power of evil, but there is a real danger lest, in our obsession by the might and malignity of evil, we should unwittingly raise evil to the rank of a rival god and believe that, of the two, the evil power is the stronger. The sovereignty of evil has already been broken by Christ's conquest of the Cross, nevertheless Jesus' attitude towards evil in His image of the 'mountain' is truly amazing. Think of the matted mass of evil which stands in the way of the doing of God's will in the world to-day, and then look at this picture: 'Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.' The test of any claim is its working out in practice, and He did say once to a woman whose personal habits were rooted decades deep in her unconscious mind: 'Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace'—as though that were the most natural thing in the world.

The secret of existence is faith. 'God has need of man,' says Berdyaev, 'of his creative response to the divine summons.' The power which releases the energies of God and makes them available for man, and the power which releases the energies of men and makes them available for God—is faith. Evil can be overthrown and 'cast' into the sea by a united creative act of God and man.

Then there is the companion picture giving the positive side. There are hopes to be realized, ideals to be fulfilled, God's will to be done here on earth as it is done in Heaven. 'Impossible!' say some. 'Absurd,' say others. In His image of the mulberry tree Jesus frankly and fearlessly faces the fact of the 'absurd.' Let us take a look at this realistic and 'existential' picture. We lean with Jesus over the edge of the abyss and see things as they are: 'If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted [not 'cast,' as in the other case] in the sea.' That is Christ's acknowledgment of the absurd, His vision of the uprooted trees, of all man's wrecked ideals, shattered dreams, discredited utopias. There they are, all 'bobbing up and down' (and some of them even upside down as is the ideal of 'Peace' at this very moment of history) at the mercy of the winds and the waves of the world's tempestuous sea. And through the ages since the days of those disciples men have looked deep into that same abyss and have cried: 'Christianity will not work!' 'Alas, the principles of the gospel are impracticable!' There was, for instance, Friedrich Nietzsche. He stared so long into that abyss that the abyss began to stare back at him and he cried: 'Christianity is the religion of the maimed and the botched.' Even that good and wise teacher, A. N. Whitehead, looked over the edge and said: 'A literal adherence to the moral precepts scattered throughout the Gospels would mean sudden death.' And Jean-Paul Sartre stared into the same abyss and it made him sick. He wrote a book about it and called it *La Nausée*. And underneath all this 'absurdity' what is there? Nothing! Going down beneath the surface of things is just an 'Encounter with Nothingness.' That is one type of Existentialism, but there is another. Jesus is the supreme Realist. Let us look over the edge of this same abyss with Him. He, too, as we have said, sees the absurd. But He sees more—'Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted [not 'cast'!] in the sea; *and it should obey you.*' Why? Because the final word about the meaning of human existence is

not a vision of the absurd but faith in God. The secret of human existence is faith. In other words: man is not the only one who is in the picture. What you meet when you exercise this amazing power of 'faith' is not an 'encounter with nothingness' but an encounter with God. Underneath are the everlasting arms. 'Nothing,' says a leader-writer in *The Times Literary Supplement* 'could be more revolutionary than the belief that the broken order of creation is to be restored not primarily by the exercise of moral effort under the discipline of reason, but by the power of God, to be evoked by the acceptance and imitation of His mercy.' Faith is not accepting the absurd and believing the improbable; faith is taking Christ at His word and attempting the impossible. That is Christian Existentialism. It is seeing things and taking things as they are. After all, God is in the picture, and it is He and not man who is in the centre of it.

Literature

THE OLD TESTAMENT VIEW OF MAN

Perhaps the most important work on Old Testament theology published in the last generation is Professor Walther Eichrodt's *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (3 volumes [1933–1939]). It is a big book, it is not easy reading, and it has not been translated into English. Those who do not read German—and, for that matter, those who do!—will welcome an English version of a smaller work by the Basel Professor (*Das Menschenverständnis des Alten Testaments* [1944]), under the title *Man in the Old Testament* (Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 4; S.C.M.; 6s. net). The translators are the Rev. R. Gregor and Mrs. Smith, and they have done their work extremely well.

It will be noted that 'Man' in the English translation is a simplification of the *Menschenverständnis* of the original. I say this not by way of criticism of the translators—the German word is perhaps untranslatable in an English book title—but to warn the reader that he must not expect to find a text-book on the subject, something dealing with the anthropological and psychological aspects of human nature. The work has more the character of an essay, a theological essay, and its emphasis is—to quote the title of the first of its four sections—upon 'The unconditional obligation of the will of God as the basis of the Old Testament view of man.'

As Dr. Eichrodt sees it, the living awareness of personal responsibility among the Hebrews emerges much earlier in their history than has generally been supposed. 'The fundamental datum of Israel's view of life is that the individual is summoned to a responsibility which demands to be taken as absolute. The man to whom God's demand comes is recognised as a person, an I, who cannot be represented or replaced by another. Even his belonging to the nation cannot provide him with a cover behind which he might retreat from the divine demand.' Man alone of all creatures is honoured by being addressed and confronted by God as a 'Thou.' This gives him a unique place in nature. He is 'not simply a piece of nature, however firmly interwoven his life is in the order of nature.' It is this theme which gives to Dr. Eichrodt's study its relevance for thought to-day. Man is not, as so many think who have emancipated themselves from the Christian faith, a microcosm of which the universe is the macrocosm. That, instead of ennobling man, is really to degrade him. Man can only fulfil his destiny and reach his full stature as he submits to the unconditional demand of the Creator.

But how shall man respond to the unconditional ought in the face of the hindrances which beset him on every side? In the third section of the book Dr. Eichrodt considers these hindrances under four heads: those arising out of man's social ties, those arising out of his attitude to earthly goods, those arising from the evil in the world, and those arising from wickedness.

Those who are interested in 'theology' should not neglect this book because it deals with the Old Testament. Its address is even more to the theologian than it is to the Old Testament specialist. And if Dr. Eichrodt's interpretation of the Old Testament is right, the Old Testament presents a *Menschenverständnis*, a view of man, which is far from being outdated.

C. R. North

THE ERA OF THE CHURCH FATHERS

The Era of the Church Fathers, by the late Hans Lietzmann, translated by Dr. Bertram Lee Woolf (Lutterworth Press; 18s. net), is the fourth and final volume of Lietzmann's great *History of the Early Church*. Its story covers the latter half of the fourth century A.D. It was a time when men took their theology with deadly seriousness. 'Questions of dogma had become the favourite topics of conversation, not only in the salons of the upper classes but also in the shops of the bakers

and the money-changers, and in the baths and the bazaars.' The contest between Ursinus and Damasus for the right to succeed Liberius of Rome issued in something like a minor war. 'The churches became the castles of the popes. . . . A regular siege then began, with attack by storm; doors were burst in and flaming torches thrown into the building. By the evening of October 26, 366, one hundred and sixty bodies of both sexes lay on the ground.'

The first two chapters of this book, with their catalogues of names and their record of ecclesiastical manœuvrings, are masterly summaries of a complicated period, but are pedestrian enough to read. It is with the third chapter that the book catches fire; and with the emergence of Ambrose the narrative blazes into a vivid and dramatic story. Ambrose emerges as incomparably the greatest figure of the period. No one ever talked to Emperors as he did. When Valentinian, at the request of Symmachus, toyed with the idea of giving the old faith of Rome its conventional place, Ambrose wrote: 'Thou mayest go to church—but thou wilt find no clergy there; or if thou dost find them there, they will offer thee resistance.' When the dowager Empress tried to obtain a church for the Goths of her bodyguard, Ambrose announced, 'What belongs to God is outside the Emperor's power.' Valentinian, the Emperor, said of this forceful bishop, 'Soon, if Ambrose gives the orders, you will be sending me to him in chains.' 'Cæsar,' said Ambrose, 'is a son of the church; he is part of the church, not superior to the church.' It was Ambrose who compelled Theodosius to do penance, to lay aside his royal insignia and to confess his sin publicly in face of the congregation before he was allowed to partake of the sacraments again.

In this book there are masterly accounts of the work and thought of Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom and Symeon of Mesopotamia. There is an excellent account of the rise and methods of monasticism. There is a good account of the work of Evagrius Ponticus who listed the eight evil spirits which constantly attack a monk—'the demons of gluttony, adultery, avarice, despondency, irritability, weariness of being a monk, sloth, arrogance.'

The book was never completely finished. It has all Lietzmann's meticulous scholarship; obviously the sources have been examined at first hand and references are unfailingly given; it has all his lucidity of expression and dramatic vigour of narrative. It must rank with the great works of Church History. The translation is so well done that the book does not read as a translation at all.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

PRIMITIVE GOSPEL SOURCES

A novel solution of Synoptic origins is proposed by the Rev. Canon B. P. W. Stather Hunt, M.A., B.D., in *Primitive Gospel Sources* (James Clarke; 18s. net). Succinctly stated it is: In the beginning was the Testimony. This is not in itself a new idea, the author's indebtedness to Rendel Harris being freely acknowledged; but it is carried further and used to elucidate the process by which the Gospels came into being. The earliest Christian preachers, as C. H. Dodd has shown, claimed that the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Canon Hunt traces this message back to our Lord's own instruction of the disciples in the meaning of the Scriptures after the Resurrection (Lk $24^{27.\,45-48}$). The teaching then given was recorded, he thinks, in Aramaic by the Apostle Matthew—so the statement of Papias concerning the *logia* is to be understood—and copies of this work were used in the various churches as a text-book for preachers and for training converts. It consisted of Old Testament prophecies grouped under convenient heads along with brief statements of their fulfilment in the acts and words, the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Included also, in course of time if not from the first, were teachings of Jesus as the Prophet like unto Moses, and prophecies not as yet fulfilled but soon to be accomplished at the Second Advent. Hence the absence from the Epistles of argument upon the fundamentals of the Faith; all that was needed was to refer to the appropriate sections of the Testimony Book (this point is illustrated from Gal 3–4 [p. 137 ff.]).

The Gospels were produced by re-casting this material so as to form a connected story of the events which constituted the fulfilment; they are not bare histories, but are shot through with Christology. Mark is the earliest, checking and supplementing the Testimony Book with direct Petrine reminiscences. 'Matthew' took Mark as his model, but drew more largely upon the prophetic element in the common source, and sometimes preserved a fuller form of its narratives than Mark had done. The preface of Luke (who also used Mark) declares his intention to enlarge the Testimony Book from which Theophilus had received his first instruction in the Faith (so pp. 44–48).

The theory thus returns to a common source distinct from Mark for all three Gospels. Streeter is chided for giving up his earlier view that Mark used Q. The author is critical of the usual reconstructions of this document, which he inclines to identify with the Testimony Book. But he seems to put too much into the latter. Less than a tenth

of Q as commonly conceived is polemical, it does not fit in well to the category of Testimonies; moreover it shows a certain unity, and looks like a manual for training disciples. The reviewer believes that Q retains its identity as a separate source, and is not convinced of its use by Mark. He is doubtful whether the Lucan Resurrection narrative can bear the weight laid upon it here, and still prefers to find the Matthean *logia* in Q. But Canon Hunt does well to call attention to the influence of the Testimonies in preserving the memory of many of the Gospel incidents.

These criticisms touch only a small portion of this book. Most of it is a well-documented study of the Testimonies themselves. There is much interesting exegesis. If the case is overstated, it was well worth presenting.

A. D. Alexander

THE SOCIETY FOR OLD TESTAMENT STUDY BOOK LIST 1951

The Society for Old Testament Study is one of the most living and progressive of all the Societies devoted to the study of the Bible. At its meetings scholars from most of the larger churches and theological colleges meet, and, from what they say, enjoy warm fellowship, irrespective of denominational differences, in their study of Old Testament problems. The Society has recently published a volume with essays contributed by members — 'The Old Testament and Modern Study,' edited by Professor H. H. Rowley, covering the work done by scholars during the last generation, and every year since the end of the War has issued a *Book List*, also edited by Professor Rowley, with reviews by its members of all the important works on the Old Testament and allied subjects published during the year. In the *Book List for 1951* about a hundred and seventy-five reviews are grouped under ten headings (Archaeology, History, Text, Exegesis, Theology, etc.), and deal with works in, as far as I can estimate, fifteen languages. As one would expect from the quality of the writers, the reviews are most competently done, and are sound, weighty, careful, honest, as well as interesting and informing. It is a revelation to the ordinary reader to find how much new work on the Old Testament is being done, and also to find how much of a polylinguist a student must be to be able to keep abreast of his subject. A fresh wind of inspiration is blowing from the Scandinavian countries, and writers like Mowinckel in Norway and Bentzen in Denmark are casting fresh and varied light on many aspects of the Old Testament.

Librarians will find the *Book List* invaluable (I speak as one who knows), and the Old Testament student who does not know, use, and value the *Book List* puts himself by that fact quite beyond the pale. The *Book List for 1951* may be obtained from the Rev. Professor G. Henton Davies, 3 The Dell, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, at a cost of 4s. 6d. net. Professor Davies will also give information to inquirers as to the terms of membership of the Society.

J. B. Primrose

It was the desire of Dr. Albert Peel to render early English Separatists and Independents a service similar to that which a century ago the Parker Society had done for early Anglican writers. Dr. Peel unfortunately died in 1949, but the first volume of his projected book was practically finished and Dr. Leland H. Carlson has had few changes to make. Dr. Peel was interested chiefly in the works of Browne, Harrison, Barrow, Greenwood, and Penry. Without knowledge of their views it is fruitless to attempt a history of the rise of Independency and of the democratic idea in religion and in politics. He discovered, however, that the parerga of Cartwright are so interlocked in the writings of the forenamed that it seemed necessary to issue as a preliminary the text of several of Cartwright's writings. This is the volume which under Dr. Carlson is now before us—*Cartwrightiana* (Allen and Unwin; 25s. net). It is, as Dr. Peel designed, the first of a projected seven volumes. We wish the plan every success. The volumes are to be really reprints of Elizabethan Nonconformist Texts, and will become a source-book for all future historians of an interesting and very important Movement in England.

Let Us Hear the Word of God, by Miss Effie R. Gray (Church of Scotland Committee on the Religious Instruction of Youth; 3s. net), is a new Church of Scotland text-book on the Bible for Junior or Senior Bible Classes and Fellowships. The book sets out to show how in various ways and especially through the Bible God speaks to men. The method used is not the lecture method of the straight address; discussion, Bible study, question and answer, note-book work, expression work are all included. Each chapter gives a study of the background of some part of the Bible, some suggestions for Bible study, an extraction of the meaning and of the relevance of the passages treated, an application of them to modern, everyday problems, together with suggestions for opening and closing worship. The one supreme merit of this book is that it is bound to interest any youth group with whom it is used.

The Preacher's Handbook, Number Two (Epworth Press; 7s. 6d. net), edited by the Rev. Greville P. Lewis, B.A., B.D., is a book designed to help the twenty-five thousand Methodist Local Preachers in their task. It is divided into three sections. The first section has introductory articles on The Place of Methodism in the Church Universal, The Preacher's Reading and the Preacher's Use of the Hymn-book. The second section has a series of studies on The Christian Year. The third section has general studies on The Christian Doctrine of the Church and on St. Paul. In the chapter on the Festival of Harvest, Winship Storey gives an excellent illustration of God's economy in Nature. In Cheshire between 1924 and 1928 certain experiments were carried out. For two years a record was kept of the damage to crops done by insects and by birds. Then for the next three years birds were systematically destroyed until very few were seen in the neighbourhood. Then a further record was taken. It was found that damage by the first to fruit was reduced by sixty-one per cent and to seeds by eighty-five per cent, but that the cost of spraying with insecticides was up six hundred and fifty per cent. 'If all the birds in the world were killed off, man could not live another nine years because of the insects.' This is a completely excellent book, published at an astonishingly low price.

Christianity and Human Relations in Industry, by Sir George Schuster, K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., C.B.E., M.C. (Epworth Press; 6s. 6d. net), is a Beckly Social Service Lecture. In it the author discusses how Christian principles may be applied to modern complex industrial relationships. He sees that the essence of the problem is the application of the words 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' to the conduct of industrial enterprise. But he also sees that this is no vague and nebulous thing. 'No amount of kind-heartedness will compensate for functional inefficiency. . . . Kind hearts there must be; but clear heads are needed too. He distinguishes six conditions which must obtain in industry. (1) The worker must feel that he has individual responsibility and some freedom of self-expression. (2) He must feel that he is a member of a team. (3) He must understand the place of his work in the total work of the factory. (4) He must have a task which gives some satisfaction of skill in the performance and some effort without undue strain. (5) He must be persuaded that he is getting full value for his work and is not hindered by managerial inefficiency. (6) He must be satisfied that payment is adequate and fair. The great necessity is to produce a spirit in which men 'see the earning of their daily bread as a condition of self-respect, and recognise that good work well done can be an end in itself and the foundation of a happy life.' Sir George quotes a fine saying of William Temple: 'It is a mistake to suppose that God is interested solely in religion. God is a worker getting on with His job. He gave man the joy of creation so that he might share his work with Him.'

From Babylon to Bethlehem: The Story of the Jews for the last Five Centuries before Christ, by the Rev. Professor Laurence E. Browne, D.D., was first published in 1926, and reprinted in 1936. Its usefulness as a school text-book is evidenced by the fact that a revised edition has now been called for (Heffer; 6s. net). Dr. Browne has, with the assistance of Dr. Matthew Black, enlarged the sections based upon the Jewish non-canonical literature, particularly those relating to the development of the Messianic Hope, for the reason that the standard edition of this literature (Charles's 'Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha') is often not available in schools. This should add considerably to its proved usefulness.

The Moral Conduct of a Christian, by Canon Lindsay Dewar, B.D. (Mowbray; 7s. 6d. net), deserves commendation. After an analysis of the present moral situation the author examines attempts to restore morality on a non-religious basis, and deals faithfully with C. H. Waddington's scientific ethics as well as with hedonism.

Having concluded that morality needs religion as its basis, he goes on to a useful exposition of the Christian moral standard. The last chapter deals with Christian moral practice; and after emphasising in it that the practice of Christian morals presupposes the moral power of the Holy Spirit, the author touches briefly on such modern problems as war, gambling, euthanasia, and the use of contraceptives, and winds up with some illuminating remarks on Christian casuistry. Canon Dewar writes clearly and persuasively both for perplexed Christians and for non-Christians who need a secure ethical foothold.

We are glad to notice that a British edition has now been published of a characteristic work by Dr. Paul Tillich, Professor of Philosophical Theology at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. The work is entitled *The Protestant Era*, and the publishers are Messrs. Nisbet and Co. The price of the volume is 21s. net. The translation from the German is by Professor James Luther Adams, and Mr. R. H. Daubney supplies an Introduction in which the differences between the American edition [1948] and the English edition [1951] appear. The main difference is

that the concluding essay in the American edition ('Tillich's Concept of the Protestant Era'), which came from the pen of the translator, has here been omitted. The volume includes material taken from about twenty years of theological and philosophical work, in the course of which Tillich emigrated from Germany and settled in New York City. The material is in the form of collected essays on Religion and History, Religion and Culture, Religion and Ethics, Protestantism, The Present Crisis. These show Tillich to be an independent and profound thinker, standing in the Lutheran tradition, much occupied with the philosophy of history, and sensitive to the currents of the contemporary situation. A useful feature of the book in the British edition is the Bibliographical Note, contributed by R. H. Daubney, in which we have a carefully selected list of Tillich's numerous writings in German and in English. It is interesting to observe that Dr. Richard Niebuhr, of the Union Theological Seminary, was the translator of the first of the writings of Tillich to be published in English.

Prayers and Services for Christian Festivals, by the Rev. James M. Todd (Oxford University Press; 8s. 6d. net), is designed as a companion volume to 'A Book of Public Worship' which was compiled for the use of Congregationalists. Part I has services for all the great seasons of the Christian Year. Part II has short orders for the Holy Communion. Part III has special forms of prayer and worship. In it forms are given, for instance, for the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas Eve, for a Watch Night Service, for the days of Holy Week. The prayers are all beautifully designed and expressed. We may quote the following as an example. 'O God, who hast given unto all men talents to use as a sacred trust from Thee, and who wilt one day call them to give an account of their stewardship; grant unto Thy people the desire to use the powers of their minds, the skill of their hands, and the resources of the world to Thy glory and to the good of all mankind. Restrain the selfishness of those who seek personal gain and pride of place; bring to repentance all who deal unjustly with their fellow-men; and hasten the time when all shall find honourable work to do and a just reward of their toil.'

Like all such books this book has a certain remoteness and a certain lack of definiteness, for into such a book it is impossible to introduce the intimacy of personal contact between minister and people. The author knows this and is well aware that a book like this is an excellent servant but a bad master. This is an excellent book of its kind, and, wisely used, will help any one who leads public worship to enrich the treasury of his devotion.

There should be a good welcome for Dr. John MacBeath's latest book, which is a popular commentary on the First Epistle of Peter—*In Time of Trouble* (Pickering and Inglis; 6s. 6d. net). The sub-title is 'The Counsel of the Big Fisherman.' The author is a distinguished preacher, and he has arranged his expositions in a series of discourses in which his gift of simple and vivid writing finds free play. Those who know his earlier books will expect to find here many illustrative instances from literature and life, and they will not be disappointed. As the sub-title suggests, the authenticity of the Epistle is taken for granted.

The Rev. J. C. S. Nias, B.D., Priest of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd and Rector of Blandford St. Mary's, has written a timely book of absorbing interest to mark the centenary of the famous Gorham Case—*Gorham and the Bishop of Exeter* (S.P.C.K.; 17s. 6d. net). It is published for the Church Historical Society, and as a competent historian the author ranks high. The book is fully documented. As a mere record of a very interesting discussion and procedure which threatened a disruption in the Anglican Church, and was a factor in leading Manning to secede to Rome, it is, one thinks, the final word. The pamphlets which the controversy produced have been exhaustively studied, no new facts are ever likely to come to light, and no one writing in the future on the Gorham case can neglect Mr. Nias.

Mr. Nias holds the balance fairly between the prime disputants. He shows that on the subject of the relation of baptism to regeneration the view of neither was quite adequate, and finds a better, more tenable view in F. D. Maurice. Yet his conclusion is that while Gorham, the Bishop, and Maurice all make some important contribution, no final solution has been reached, all just 'demonstrate what an unsearchable mystery is enshrined in this sacrament.'

We have received a copy of *The Church*, being the Report of a Theological Commission on Faith and Order appointed by the World Council of Churches. The Chairman was the Rev. Dr. R. Newton Flew, and the Secretary, the Rev. Canon Kenneth Riches. The Report has been published by the S.C.M. Press in a paper cover at the price of 3s. 6d. net. It is issued to prepare for the discussions on the subject of the Church at the World Conference in Lund [1952]. It does not claim to have solved 'the immense doctrinal problem' with which the Commission was presented.

The Wrath of God

By the Reverend Leon Morris, M.Th., B.Sc., Vice-Principal, Ridley College, Melbourne

Much water has flowed under the bridge since J. McLeod Campbell wrote 'the wrath of God against sin is a reality, however men have erred in their thoughts as to how that wrath was to be appeased . . . Christ . . . must be conceived of as dealing with the righteous wrath of God against sin, and *as according to it that which was due*.'[1] In the controversy over the nature of the Atonement which has occupied the attention of many notable scholars during the intervening years the nature and place of the wrath of God have been vigorously discussed without any consensus of opinion being reached although there has been a general abandonment of crude and unworthy views of 'the wrath.' During recent years, however, there has been a tendency for scholars to espouse the conclusion that wrath cannot be applied in any meaningful sense to the Deity, and, for example, Nicolas Berdyaev can say, 'Anger in every shape and form is foreign to God.'[2] Again, C. H. Dodd in his Moffatt Commentary on Romans thinks of God's wrath as simply retribution. In the Old Testament he says the work of the prophets is such that '"the Wrath of God" is taken out of the sphere of the purely mysterious, and brought into the sphere of cause and effect: sin is the cause, disaster the effect . . . in speaking of wrath and judgment the prophets and psalmists have their minds mainly on events, actual or expected, conceived as the inevitable results of sin; and when they speak of mercy they are thinking mainly of the personal relation between God and His people. Wrath is the effect of human sin; mercy is not the effect of human goodness, but is inherent in the character of God.'[3] This view of the Divine wrath he thinks is further developed in the teaching of Jesus so that 'anger as an attitude of God to men disappears, and His love and mercy become all embracing.'[4] St. Paul, he thinks, agrees with this in substance and retains the concept of the wrath of God 'not to describe the attitude of God to man, but to describe an inevitable process of cause and effect in a moral universe'[5] and he appeals to Ro $1^{18f.}$ in support.

In this article it will be maintained in the first place that the Scriptural writers persist in regarding wrath as a personal activity of the Deity, and in the second place that some such view is necessary for us to-day.

Beginning with the Old Testament, let us notice first of all that the prophets had a strongly developed view of the sovereignty of God. Nothing that men can do escapes Him, and nothing, it would seem, can be done without Him, for 'the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men' (Dn 4^{17}). The punishment consequent on sin is just as much due to God as is the forgiveness which remits such punishment, for God is in all of life. 'Shall evil befall a city, and the Lord hath not done it?' (Am 3^{6}) is the incredulous query of one of the prophets, and the same man emphasizes that it is the Lord who 'bringeth sudden destruction upon the strong' (Am 5^{9}). We read similarly in Is 45^{6-7} 'I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I am the Lord, that doeth all these things.' There is hardly point in continuing the list, for throughout the Old Testament it is assumed that God is active throughout His creation, and that His hand is to be discerned in the chastisements which come upon men.

Then the prophets and the psalmists use the most strongly personal terms when they speak of the anger of the Lord. What else are we to make of passages like the following? 'Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger against thee. . . . And mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: . . . and ye shall know that I the Lord do smite' (Ezk 7^{8-9}). Or 'The anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart' (Jer 23^{20}). Or 'Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is as a devouring fire: and his breath is as an overflowing stream, that reacheth even unto the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity. . . . And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and the flame of a devouring fire, with a blast, and tempest, and hailstones. For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be broken in pieces' etc. (Is 30^{27-31}). 'O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast broken us down; Thou hast been angry: . . . Thou hast made the land to

[1] *The Nature of the Atonement* [3], 135.
[2] *Freedom and the Spirit*, 175.
[3] *Op. cit.*, 22. [4] *Op. cit.*, 23. [5] *Ib.*

tremble; thou hast rent it: . . . Thou hast shewed thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggering' (Ps 60^{1-3}).

It is difficult to imagine how the prophets and psalmists could possibly have expressed more strongly the personal aspect of the wrath of God. While disaster is regarded as the inevitable result of man's sin, it is so in the view of the Old Testament, not by some inexorable law of an impersonal Nature, but because a Holy God wills to pour out the vials of His wrath upon them who commit sin. Indeed, it is largely because wrath is so fully personal in the Old Testament that mercy becomes so fully personal, for mercy is the action of the same God who was angry allowing his wrath to be turned away. It should be noted that many passages place the wrath and the mercy of God on the same plane as personal activities, as when we read 'he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy' (Mic 7^{18}) or 'Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger' (Ps 85^{2-3}).

It is true that there are some passages which speak of wrath in more or less impersonal terms, or which connect punishment directly with sin, but these will always be found to imply the continuing activity of Yahweh. For example Ps 38^{3} says 'There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine indignation; Neither is there any health in my bones because of my sin,' words which might well be cited in support of the contention that wrath is an impersonal retribution were it not that the two preceding verses strongly emphasize the personal Divine activity, 'O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.' This will be found to be typical of the Old Testament position—God is personally active in deeds of wrath as in deeds of mercy.

We cannot feel that it is otherwise when we turn to the Gospels, although it is true that the actual term 'wrath' is not of frequent occurrence, and it is also true that in the teaching of Jesus the love of God received a new emphasis. But Jesus Himself is once said to have been angry (Mk 3^{5}), and He spoke of the siege of Jerusalem as 'wrath unto this people' (Lk 21^{23}), while His forerunner warned men of 'the wrath to come' (Mt 3^{7}, Lk 3^{7}). We also read of the disobedient (or unbeliever ὁ ἀπειθῶν τῷ υἱῷ) that 'the wrath of God abideth on him' (Jn 3^{36}), where wrath is the portion of the sinner, corresponding to the believer's reception of eternal life.

But in other places where the term 'wrath' does not occur we find strong expressions for the Divine hostility to all that is evil. Thus Jesus taught explicitly that men stand in danger of a hell which may be described as a 'hell of fire' (Mt 5^{22}, etc.), or as 'the eternal fire' (Mt 18^{8}), a place where 'their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched' (Mk 9^{48}). God is to be feared, for He, 'after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell' (Lk 12^{5}). Jesus' severe strictures on Capernaum and other cities (Mt 11^{20-24}), and on the Pharisees (Mt 23), show an intolerance of evil, which we see again in the 'except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish' of Lk $13^{3.5}$, and the saying that 'whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin' (Mk 3^{29}). It is in keeping with this general attitude that we read of Judas 'good were it for that man if he had not been born' (Mk 14^{21}), and that on the day of judgment the verdict on some will be 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire' (Mt 25^{41} and cf. *v.*^{46}). In the parables judgment is a persistent theme as we see for example from Mt $13^{42.50}$ 18^{34} 21^{44} $22^{7.13}$. So, too, is the idea of the 'outer darkness' where there will be 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' as we see from Mt 8^{12} $13^{42.50}$ 22^{13} 24^{51} 25^{30}, Lk 13^{28}. In the face of all this it is difficult to maintain that Jesus had discarded the conception of the wrath of God. For Him the Divine reaction in the face of evil was a solemn and terrible reality.

Nor is the case different when we turn to the rest of the New Testament. It is sometimes said that there is significance in the fact that 'the wrath' occurs often without being definitely associated with God, and that this points to a semi-personalization, wrath being conceived of as something different from and almost independent of God.[1] To this there are two answers. The first is that more than one conclusion can be drawn from the occurrence of 'the wrath,' and it is quite legitimate for us to hold that the prophets who spoke of the coming day of wrath when God would punish sin had done their work so well that the fact that the wrath that was to be revealed was God's wrath did not require emphasis. The second is that the association of 'the wrath' with God is not so tenuous as some would have us believe. 'The wrath' (ὀργή) is specifically said to be of God in Jn 3^{36}, Ro 1^{18}, Eph 5^{6}, Col 3^{6}, Rev 19^{15}. In addition

[1] Cf. Sydney Cave (to whose writings the present writer owes a debt he can never repay), 'they (*i.e.* Law and Wrath) are almost personified powers, which, owing to God their origin, act on in partial independence of God, and are hostile to men as He is not' (*The Doctrine of the Work of Christ*, 43).

ἡ ὀργή σου of Rev 11^{18} and τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ of Rev 14^{10} 16^{19} obviously refer the wrath to God, while most people would agree that Ro 9^{22} is correctly translated by 'What if God, willing to shew his wrath' (with EV). Again, 'the wrath of the Lamb' (Rev 6^{16}) associates wrath personally with a Divine Being. θυμός is used to convey the idea of an anger specifically linked with God in Rev $14^{10.19}$ $15^{1.7}$ 16^{1} 19^{15}, while in Rev 16^{19} the anger is clearly that of God. Nor have we told the whole story when we have listed the passages where there is an explicit connexion of 'wrath' with God, for there are some passages without this where it is quite plain that such a link must be postulated. Thus C. Anderson Scott includes in a list of passages where 'Directly or indirectly St. Paul connects God with the idea of anger or wrath' Ro 2^{5} 3^{5} 5^{9}, 1 Th 1^{10} 2^{16}, while he thinks 'the same reference is less clearly expressed' in Ro 4^{15}, Eph 2^{3}, 1 Th 5^{9}.[1]

Nor have we yet finished. What are we to make of such a passage as 2 Th 1^{7-9} where we read of 'the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might'? Surely it is clear from this that the Apostle looked forward to a day when that which he elsewhere designates as 'the wrath of God' will have full operation. As we read these words we cannot think that he is referring to an impersonal retribution, for he speaks of the revelation of a *person*. Similarly when we read Ro 2^{5-9} although we do not encounter the phrase 'the wrath of God' we cannot feel that the Apostle is thinking of an impersonal retribution which operates while God remains apart, little more than a spectator. Paul's vigorous language gives us rather a picture of a God who is personally active in dealing with sinners.

We saw earlier that Dodd sees in Ro $1^{18f.}$ the concept of 'the wrath of God' used 'to describe an inevitable process of cause and effect in a moral universe.' But in these very verses we find the personal activity of God brought out, for when St. Paul might well say that the sins of the heathen produced inevitable results or make use of some similar expression, he seems to go out of his way to lay stress upon the Divine activity. 'God gave them up . . . unto uncleanness' (*v.*[24]) . . . 'God gave them up unto vile passions' (*v.*[26]) . . . 'God gave them up unto a reprobate mind' (*v.*[28]). It is true that sin has its consequences, but for St. Paul this does not take place apart from God, for His activity is to be discerned in those consequences. Indeed the whole of this section might be regarded as an expansion of the opening words, 'For wrath of God is being continually revealed from heaven upon all impiety and unrighteousness of men.' And, as H. Wheeler Robinson says, 'this wrath of God is not the blind and automatic working of abstract law—always a fiction, since "law" is a conception, not an entity, till it finds expression through its instruments. The wrath of God is the wrath of divine *Personality*.'[2]

Thus it seems tolerably clear that throughout the Bible the wrath of God is thought of as the reaction of the Deity to sin, a reaction moreover which is an expression of the personality of God. The idea that God cannot be angry is by no means a new one, but it is not Biblical, and as Edwyn Bevan has pointed out, it seems to have come into Christianity from the Greek philosophic view.[3] It represents a pagan, not a Christian view of God.

It would seem that objection to the use of this thoroughly Biblical expression arises because it can be understood in a too strongly anthropomorphic way. Human action is marred by elements of anger and loss of self-control, and if we feel that these are essential components of wrath we have no option but to discard the term, for we cannot ascribe to God an irrational passion.

But it is not at all clear that such things are of the very essence of anger. There is an anger we speak of as 'righteous indignation' where we catch a glimpse of a fiery zeal for the right in the service of the highest moral ends, and which is perfectly compatible with pure love. If we take this as our pattern we may well retain the term 'wrath' to particularize the Divine reaction to the fact of sin, it being understood that when we use the term of the Divine attitude it is free from the imperfections always associated with it in men. But this is not unreasonable, for we must adopt the same procedure when we use any term of God, even love.

But we must not attempt to water down the phrase, for 'the wrath of God' is a strong expression which brings home forcefully the truth that God reacts vigorously in the face of sin. 'Neither doth he abhor any thing that is evil'[4] is a terrible condemnation of a man's character, but the Bible never ascribes such moral flabbiness to God. Nor can we dispense with the idea, for a God who does not loathe evil is not surely a God whom we can worship. It may be that 'the wrath of God' is not a perfect way of describing

[1] *Christianity according to St. Paul*, 78.

[2] *Redemption and Revelation*, 269.

[3] *Symbolism and Belief*, 210.

[4] Ps 36^{4} (Prayer Book version).

this Divine reaction—few would maintain that it is—but it does at least remind us of the fact of God's hostility to evil, and we must refuse alternative expressions which do not safeguard this truth. To speak of an impersonal retribution does not, for it implies that God personally is indifferent to moral evil.

A further objection to the idea of an impersonal retribution is the difficulty in understanding what meaning we can assign to it on any genuinely theistic position. If God brought the moral order into being, then He cannot be absolved of responsibility when retribution overtakes the sinner. Unless we are prepared to jettison the concept of the sovereignty of God, retribution in a moral universe demands a stern side to the Divine nature, and it is this which is indicated by the expression 'the wrath of God.'

A similar conclusion is forced upon us by a consideration of expiation. There are few who would deny that in some sense Christ expiated man's sin (and, indeed, many of those who reduce the wrath of God to impersonal retribution explicitly speak of expiation as having been wrought by Christ). But this raises questions. Why should sin be expiated? What will be the consequences if there is no expiation? Expiation would seem to be a meaningless procedure unless there is some such reality as the wrath of God to be reckoned with.

Finally we reiterate that to speak of the wrath of God is not to deny His love. It has often been pointed out that the opposite of love is not wrath, but hate, and that love is not at all incompatible with wrath. Indeed we may doubt whether strong affection untempered by a sterner side is worthy of being called love at all, and whether sentimentality is not a better name for it. It certainly is not the highest form of love that we know, and cannot form an analogy to the Divine love. The love of God is a love which is so jealous for the right and for the good of the loved one that it blazes out in fiery wrath against everything that is evil. D. M. Baillie gives expression to this when he speaks of God's wrath as 'identical with the consuming fire of inexorable divine love in relation to our sins.' [1]

[1] *God was in Christ*, 189.

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Dinkies

By the Reverend John B. Logan, B.D., S.T.M., Coupar Angus

'My times are in thy hand.'—Ps 31[15].

Every boy has them often in his hands; girls play with them occasionally. They're wonderful little scale models of the real thing, and they are usually seen in quantities, or rather convoys, on the floor, being pushed about or standing neatly parked.

Yes; I'm talking about Dinkies, and the Dinkies are to talk back to you through me this time. Let me repeat and explain two or three of the things that they say.

'Every Dinky is an exact model, outwardly, of the real thing.'

Of course, that's the point. To all appearance they look like the thing they represent—a saloon car, a loudspeaker van, a bus, even a lawn-mower, and a wheelbarrow; we have all these in our house. When you push them about, or arrange them in a toy garage, you can easily imagine that the real thing is there, and that's their value.

In the first chapter of Genesis we read that 'God created man in his own image,' and that's our value. This doesn't mean that God looks like us, but that God, who is a Spirit, gave us His own gifts inside—life, and a mind to think, a will to decide. God sent Jesus Christ His only Son to show us exactly what He is like, and we are to try to be like Jesus. Jesus was good, kind, gentle, and helpful, and God wants us to be all these things. We should pray: 'O God, make me more like Jesus.' Then Jesus will begin to look out of our eyes, and through our smiles and deeds.

The trouble is that quite often we're not like Jesus. We have our weaknesses. The Dinkies say quite frankly:

'Every Dinky has a weakness.'

I'm thinking now of the Dinkies that run on tyres—I didn't say 'tyred wheels' in case you mistook my meaning. The weakness is that the tyres come off, as all younger brothers and sisters know—they take the tyres off, and scatter them all over the house. Sometimes they chew them, even when they're not eating all their porridge. Then the Dinky looks wretched and runs badly, and Daddy has to hunt for the missing tyres and put them on again. I've tried putting them on with glue, but still they come off.

All of us have tyres that come off. Goodness, kindness, gentleness, helpfulness—these are the tyres which keep us running smoothly; but the sins of pride and selfishness pull our tyres off

and stop us from running. Then we have to go to our Father in Heaven and ask Him to give us back His good gifts, saying: 'O God, forgive me for my sins, and help me to be good, for Jesus' sake.' The sad thing is that we pull off our own tyres. So we must put ourselves daily in God's hand.

Here the Dinkies say: 'Every Dinky works best in its owner's hand.'

You put your hand over it, and push it along the way you want it to go; and you often make a noise like a car or a bus to complete the effect. The Dinky does its job when it allows itself to be moved according to the idea in its owner's mind. Then another Dinky, and another, is pushed along, and they all make up a pattern that pleases the owner, going in convoy with others, standing together in parking places.

God our Creator has a plan for us in which we find our real job and our true happiness. Let us ask Him: 'O God, please take me into your hand and use me as you will.' The Psalmist says of God: 'My times are in thy hand.'

The Atom and Me [1]

Not so long ago I slipped down some stone steps and sat down rather violently at the bottom of them. And as I rubbed my bruises I couldn't help wishing that both those steps and my body hadn't been quite so solid! And I suppose that's the sort of thing that makes us all rather inclined to imagine that the only real things in the world are the things you can see and handle and bump into—material things like tables and chairs, trees and lamp-posts, houses and motor cars, and so on . . . and that's why it's so easy to get the idea that the most important thing about *me* (and this goes for other people too) is my body; because after all that's the thing that seems most real about me, isn't it? Yet look at it—it's only a matter of plain common sense: tables and chairs wear out in time; so do trees and lamp-posts and houses; and even the most up-to-date streamlined American car will one day find itself on the scrap-heap. And it's just the same with that part of me I call my body. But cheer up—it's not as bad as it looks.

Last week we were thinking how all these so-called 'material' things in creation, from stars to our human bodies, are made up of those mysterious little things called 'atoms.' A scientist could take a small bit of any one of them—a small bit of a table or a lamp-post or a motor-car or a small bit of *me*, if you like (say, one of my toes or just one single hair)—and break it up into all the billions of tiny atoms it's made of. But (and this is the important thing) though he could do that with any part of my *body*, there are parts of me that simply can't be treated like that; and this is where *I'm* so different from all these other things. I'll show you what I mean. I'm going to stop for a moment and think of something. . . . Right, I've done it. I've just imagined to myself for a moment—my small son, Christopher. I've had a clear and vivid picture of him in my mind. Now, suppose you ask me to say exactly where that vivid mental picture of Christopher was—well, I couldn't tell you. I could point vaguely to my head and say, 'Somewhere in there,' but I couldn't put my finger on the exact spot. It was in my 'mind.' Well, suppose a great brain surgeon were to operate on me and cut open my brain, would he be able to find that little thought-image there and pick it out with a pair of tweezers and say, 'Here you are—here's your thought about Christopher'? Of course he couldn't. He might take my 'brain' and split it up into all the tiny atoms that it's made of; but he couldn't do that with my thoughts, my 'mind.' Because that's not made of atoms at all—and there are plenty of other things in my make-up that aren't either. What about that important part of me that decides whether I'll do something or not—my *will*? What about that part of me that enjoys music and pictures and lovely scenery—my *feelings*? What about my love and affection for my family and friends . . . all those things that make up my character or personality or spirit (call it what you like), the real *me*? You can't chop those things up into atoms. You can't measure them or weigh them or put them under a microscope. And yet they're real enough. No one in his senses can doubt that. The plain truth is that the most important things about me—the things that make me a living, thinking, responsible person—don't belong to the material world at all.

On Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, in many churches people hear those impressive words spoken: 'Remember, O man, that dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.' (They come from the Book of Genesis.) Well, that's the plain truth of it. As far as my body's concerned I am merely dust (or 'atoms' if I like that better—it comes to the same thing), and that part of me obviously won't last for ever. But the other part will; so it's only sensible to stop for a bit and just remember very clearly what is the important thing about me, my soul; and then perhaps I can use these forty days of Lent, between now and Easter, as an opportunity for polishing that up a bit (specially if it's been getting rather rusty) and, with God's help, trying to make it a bit more like what God meant it to be!

[1] John G. Williams, *Switch on for the News*, 37.

The Christian Year

QUINQUAGESIMA

The Joy of Being a Christian

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. KENT, M.A., GLASGOW

'Blessed . . . Blessed . . . Blessed . . .'—Mt 5^{3-11}.

We Christians have been too much in the doldrums of late. Surrounded by so many people who are apprehensive and pessimistic, we have fallen victim to their mood. We have lost the savour and tang of authentic Christianity.

True, we have much to make us depressed. Formidable problems eluding our solution; proud politicians jockeying for prestige, denying us peace; wearying calls to greater endeavour so that our means will meet our increasing demands; the pagan and garish throng indifferent to moral imperatives; the vacant pews that announce men's neglect of the worship of God; the startling and sorrowful ignorance of the Bible and the faith to which it gives birth—these and many more facts depress our spirits. We are in the midst of a sinful age on which God's judgment has been pronounced. Mournfully we wait for the last syllable to be spelled out in our doom.

If this represents the mood of many Christians to-day then it is a serious departure from the faith they have inherited. We thought we had developed the capacity for making an accurate estimate of 'realities' without losing the resilience and hopefulness our Christian faith inspires. We had travelled far from the days when to be a Christian meant taking this sombre view of life. For generations now we have renounced the doctrines of our forefathers who wore a mask of solemnity whenever they raised their voices on religious matters or entered the church. Long ago that great and godly man, A. B. Davidson, once said: 'Did it ever strike you that Christ never was a child? . . . You do not fancy Him a child like your children, gay and free of concern; He was grave, retired, and sad. He moved about with a weight upon Him. It is not anywhere recorded of Him that He smiled. . . . You can hardly fancy that He ever looked young.'

How we used to smite that idea! We would pull out of Christ's life passages to disprove this dismal misrepresentation of Him. 'Never smiled!'? we would say. 'Listen to this.' And we would select from His words and actions instances to show His humour and His geniality. 'Never a child!'? Look at the little children running eagerly to Him for His blessing, and listen to Him declaring that unless people had the spirit of the child they just could not see the Kingdom of God. No one could say that unless he himself had a childlike heart—or were a hypocrite. 'Grave, retired, and sad!' We would lay that lie. Did Jesus not make one of His last benefactions to His disciples the gift of His joy, a joy that would be abiding and would be full?

We had thought that this aspect of our Lord's life had been so firmly established and the spirit of it had been so widely communicated that Christians had appropriated His joy so that, as He promised, no man or set of circumstances could take it away from them. But apparently we have been wrong. The joy exhibited and promised by Christ has not become the secure and settled possession of modern Christians.

And why?

Is it that we have misunderstood the character of the joy that Jesus confers? We may have thought of it in terms of the transitory exuberance that is at the mercy of circumstances. It is not the effervescence on the surface of life that can be blown away at the first breath of adversity but the deep undercurrent that remains constant whatever the weather. 'For,' says W. M. Macgregor, 'joy is more than the lightheartedness that withers at the touch of trouble . . . it remains undimmed through long experience of pain, so that men who have had their share of trial come to the end with hearts serene and glad as any child's.'

Or is it because we have not entered into the experience of original Christianity? It was not thus in the first days of the faith. Then the disciples presented to the world a cheerful countenance. They could take account of the grimmest facts and maintain a serene and joyful faith. A reckless gaiety and vivacity characterized their lives. While others were offering with fear costly sacrifices to appease the wrath of the gods, Christians were worshipping with a satisfying felicity that shone in their faces.

At every period, too, in the history of our faith, when it has laid hold upon men with compelling power, they have burst into song. They have really seen and felt the presence of Jesus and it has been like the turning of the key in the cell, freeing the prisoner, the injection of new life into the veins of the discouraged, the setting of the hopeless within a new world of entrancing horizons, the raising of the dead and the giving of them back to the bereaved. 'The joy of the Lord' has not merely been a haunting phrase from the Scriptures but a very real experience that has required a new vocabulary, a new volume of song to give it utterance.

To that meaning of joy and to that experience of life in Jesus Christ we need to be recalled in these days when so many Christians are wearing

doleful countenances and have heavy and despondent hearts.

Such a meaning and such an experience are to be had in these words of our Lord. Here He is sitting on a hill with His disciples around Him. What is He saying? What is the gist of His teaching in this passage? Where does His emphasis lie?

Ask that question and a myriad answers come at us from every direction. One says that He is presenting a picture of the ideal life. Another declares that this is His definition of the true nature of a Christian man. Still another avers that He is laying down the essential conditions for entering the Kingdom of God. With many voices and varying theological accents they set before us the pattern of the life into which Jesus Christ is introducing us. All of which is very true. But still we want to ask, Is this where the emphasis lies? If this was all our Lord was telling His disciples is it not likely that His words would have been phrased differently? Why did He begin His every sentence with the word 'blessed' unless He was emphasizing the life of joy to which He was calling them? 'Blessed.... Blessed.... Blessed.' This is Christ's prescription for the life of secure gladness. Here is the basis for a settled and unshakable felicity. To men who were solemnly straining to conform to the exacting demands of the Mosaic law He was offering the life with the joy that nothing could take away.

Look at the characteristics of the life out of which this joy springs. First, our Lord suggests, it depends on a right relationship with our brother men. Think of the moments when we have known fullness of joy, and we will acknowledge that they have been times when we have been in completest accord with our fellow-men. Soldiers caught up in the spirit of camaraderie, workmen losing themselves in their corporate endeavour, choristers singing with heart and voice, missioners seeking to win their brethren for Christ, and a multitude more, will tell you that their finest hour has been when they were least conscious of themselves, fully surrendered in the fellowship and service of their brothers. That is the sort of life to which Christ gives access. Touch even lightly on the qualities He enumerates and you see that all the prerequisites are there for this joy that abides—the ability to forget oneself completely; no standing on one's dignity; no asking for profit or rewards; a sincere and transparent humility—that is a necessity. Such a meekness voicing itself in an uncensorious spirit and seeking to break down the barriers of estrangement between man and man will lead a man into the hearts of his brethren so that he is in fullest fellowship with them. Of course, more detailed examination of these virtues would reveal their ampler scope and show how substantial is the ground on which our deepest satisfactions rest. Even when that fellowship seems to break down and the Christian stands firmly by the side of his Lord before the reviling and persecuting throng the joy of the Lord is not denied him. When Henry Martyn wrote about the hostility of the Persians and said: 'Their sneers are more difficult to bear than the brickbats they throw at me but both are an honour of which I am not worthy,' he was expressing something every Christian knows about the inner felicity of witnessing for Christ. None of the promises of Christ is more marvellously fulfilled than the joy of suffering for His sake.

Yet this right relationship with men which brings this blessedness is itself more firmly grounded. It rests on a right relationship with God. Take even a glance at the essentials of this relationship as Christ sets them down and we see how strong are the foundations of our joy. Poverty in the sight of God puts us beyond the assault of the things that endanger our happiness. One morning on the minister's desk was laid a folded paper containing these words: 'The prayers of this congregation are requested for a man who is growing rich.' For Jesus never wearied of warning us that trust in worldly possessions and position warred against the fundamental necessity of simple and utter trust in God alone. No possessions, no ambitions, no virtue, 'nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy Cross I cling.' That is not glib piety but a realistic appreciation of our true condition and the starting point of our final bliss. It also gives meaning to our contrition and makes true penitence possible. We have nothing to set over against our failure and sin and that makes our mourning sincere. When the light had broken upon Pascal his sister took him to task for being too gleefully penitent. But why not? Is not this the essence of the Christian's joy? Nothing can make the heart glad like the release of sins forgiven. It sets the soul free for the life for which it was designed—the steadfast and single-minded pursuit of righteousness. And when a man is living the life for which God intended him no deeper or more serene satisfaction can he find.

Here are the resources out of which the Christian's life is sustained. A historian, writing of Cromwell's time, makes this appeal to his readers: 'Pity the man who had to make his choice between the Cavalier, with his godless gaiety, and the Roundhead, with his glum godliness.' Pity him indeed. No such alternative is ever put before the Christian, however dark his prospects may appear. Christ has made possible and accessible the life whose joy neither man nor circumstance can destroy.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Alone with the Devil

BY THE REVEREND JOHN HOWAT, B.D., EDINBURGH

'Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.'—Mt 4[1].

There are some people who say that they have no personal acquaintance with the devil; indeed, they do not believe that he exists. But those of us who know and believe otherwise are in very good company; for here right at the outset of His ministry, before He had uttered one word of His gospel or wrought one act of healing or compassion, we are told that Jesus spent forty days alone with the devil. The very fact that He was alone, that there was no multitude present and none of His closest intimates, means that the story of what transpired must have come originally from Jesus Himself.

It also suggests that the form in which we have the story came from Jesus Himself. In order to make plain to ordinary mortals the nature of the spiritual conflict through which He passed in those forty days in the desolation of the wilderness, He did what He was so often to do later on. He translated His spiritual struggle and torment of soul into pictorial imagery. Knowing Jesus' favourite method as a teacher, we are not to suppose that the devil came to Him as a human or superhuman apparition with whom He engaged in cross talk, and who took Him by the hand and led Him through the streets of Jerusalem to the Temple and later to the summit of some neighbouring mountain. Jesus was an artist and, as His parables show, a master of story-telling; and we miss the whole point in His teaching often if we refuse to pierce below the imagery He employed or if we allow our literalism to prevent our discovering the deep spiritual truth He meant His stories and pictures to convey.

1. First of all we must see how this ordeal in the desert is such that it ranges our Lord side by side with everyone of us. Here on the very threshold of His life's work He was assailed by suggestions, plausible suggestions, seductive suggestions, with which He had to fight with all His powers before He overcame them and succeeded in thrusting them away from Him. He Himself, as He went through the fires of the conflict, was in no doubt as to their true nature. They were evil, satanic, of the devil. That was His description of them: 'he was tempted of the devil.'

There is a common impression that the good people in the world, the really good people, the people we all immediately recognize to be good, do not and cannot possibly know very much about evil. They go on their way through life unscathed by the fires that torment the lesser breeds, never experiencing the real bitterness of the conflict that the sinner and the depraved know so well. That is a complete misunderstanding. Surely the man who fights the battle and keeps on fighting with every ounce of his energy till he comes out victorious knows the real strength of the forces against him far better than the man who capitulates at the first sight of the enemy. The serenity and peace and moral grandeur of the saints have all had to be fought for; they are theirs in such rich measure because they have fought on till the whistle blew.

Our Lord, therefore, is not as one apart from us—at least in this respect; He had to struggle and to keep on struggling in order that He might overcome. He knew what evil was and what the fight with evil meant, not by looking at other people less fortunately endowed than He and watching how they fared but from the elemental struggle He had to wage Himself. He knew the power of evil and its satanic strength. The fact that He overthrew the devil does not mean that He never met the devil and had no knowledge of the duel in which all humankind are engaged.

2. In the next place we must see how this ordeal of our Lord in another respect separates Him from every one of us. If His temptations are evidence of the reality of His manhood, the particular nature of these temptations puts Him in a class apart from all others.

For when you go over them one by one—turning stones into bread, casting Himself down from a pinnacle of the Temple, bowing down to the devil in order to win world dominion for Himself—in whatever way you interpret the imagery of these temptations, you must realize that they are not the kind of temptations we have to wrestle with. They are not the urges of greed and lust and hatred that fill up our common days. They are a particular kind of temptation and the particular kind of temptation that faces One beginning His life-work in the full awareness of His unique mission to mankind.

That He should turn stones into bread—what was that but the lure to go and feed the hungry multitude, answer their every need, minister to their bodily wants? It was an attractive rôle, and a rôle that would very soon have won Him a numerous following. From the very beginning Jesus was aware of the bitterness and suffering that want brought to the children of men. To lift this burden from their shoulders, ease their lot, satisfy their physical need was a mission to humanity that was not without its pressing appeal. But Jesus put it from Him, though it meant a struggle; not because He lacked sympathy for

man in his poverty, but because He saw deeper into man's real distress and knew of a greater hunger and thirst that He must minister to. 'Man doth not live by bread alone.' Man's deepest distress is not an economic one; there is a Bread of Life, of which if a man eats he shall never hunger.

That He should cast Himself down from a pinnacle of the Temple—what was that but to win men's interest by spectacular feats? There are always some who will hasten in pursuit of the weird and the wonderful. We are all prone to be attracted by the uncanny; any unusual experience that comes our way or forces itself upon our attention we immediately relate to the mysterious way in which God works. It was open to Jesus to feed the soul of the curious multitude on displays of that kind. All through His ministry He was faced with this dilemma. Whenever He healed a sick man or a leper the crowds gathered, captivated by the wonder of it all. But again that was not what He had come to do; there were greater wonders that He must bring home to the hearts and minds of men, the wonder of the heavenly Father's love, who made the lily of the field and the bird in the hedgerow and who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

That He should bow down and worship the tempter that all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them should be His—what was that but that He should win the whole world by becoming the devil's disciple? Men can be enlisted in the cause of evil; men will respond when their ugliest passions are stirred and their baser instincts summoned into service. We have seen that only too clearly in our own day to deny the appeal of evil to common men on a grand scale. That possibility was open also to Jesus; but He knew that the Father's way, though it might be a hard way, was to win men for righteousness and truth and love.

So Jesus with great torment of spirit fought out in the secrecy of His soul the strategy of the Kingdom of God which He was to pursue undeviatingly in the coming days. Here He thrust away every easy path that He might have chosen in order to win men, and went forth knowing what track the Divine Son must take in being true to the Father who had sent Him.

Such temptations are not for you and me. If the struggle in the desert ranges Him with us in our struggle, it also separates Him from us. If it reveals Him as true Man, it also reveals Him as the Divine Son.

3. And yet, and this is the third point we must notice, there is still another respect in which Jesus facing the tempter does not so much unite Himself to us but unite us to Himself. For has He not called us and chosen us to be members of His body, His servants and witnesses in the world? Has He not sent us out to do His work for Him and to be His servants in furthering the triumph of His Kindgom?

That must mean that His temptations must always be our temptations, not in a private, personal sense, as we have seen, but as members of the fellowship of His Church, when we face the world's bitter need in the service of the gospel. These old temptations, of which we read in the early chapters of the first three Gospels, are not old temptations but are ever present to the Christ's Church in every age. To forget the true nature of Christ's gospel and become busied with political and economic cures for the ills of humanity, to win the allegiance of men by all kinds of attractions instead of calling upon them to take up their cross and follow Him, to compromise with evil, because it is in a good cause, thereby winning perhaps the whole world—wealth, power, and a good name, but in the process losing its very soul—how such temptations dog the steps of the Church in every age including our own!

I am certain that as each one of us examines his own churchmanship, the things he admires in the Church, the things he does for the Church, the things he desires for the Church, he will find that the tempter is never far away and that the voices that spoke to our Lord in the wilderness speak again to us. But as He overcame, so would He have His Church overcome and be to all the world what in the days of His flesh He was to men.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Ashamed of the Gospel?

BY THE REVEREND ROBERT BROWN, B.A., B.D., LEICESTER

'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.'—Ro 1^{16}.

Not ashamed—intellectually, not ashamed—morally, not ashamed—spiritually, and that in face of the intellectual, moral, and spiritual best of the world of his own day. 'The ancient world,' wrote Dr. T. R. Glover, 'produced great types of men, and we miss something of the victory of Christ if we fail to realize the grandeur of the types He captured.'

In face of that best, St. Paul says, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.'

But there was another side to that picture of the ancient world, a dark and lurid side, of which the Apostle makes mention in his first chapter of Romans. It speaks of the moral decadence of the slave-ridden empire; a decadence which was to be its final undoing.

Between these two extremes of the best and the worst in that old world there were the great unthinking masses of the population of whom it has been said that they had 'ceased to believe in anything but blank endurance, but acceptance of whatever the selfishness of rulers and adventurers and the malice of irrational fortune might bring upon them.' All types flocked to Rome, the best and the worst, and these thoughtless masses who could so easily be roused to work destruction and for whose allegiance the best and the worst struggled to gain the mastery. As Paul contemplates going to Rome, and taking part in that age-old conflict, knowing he was about to preach One who, as Chrysostom was to declare, 'passed for the son of a carpenter, brought up in Judea, in the house of a poor woman . . . and who died like a criminal in the company of robbers,' he faces the situation squarely and with quiet assurance says, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.'

And, if we see these words against the background of the Apostle's teaching as a whole, we can see how this gospel was one of which no man need be ashamed.

1. In the first place *St. Paul was unashamed of the gospel when he took it into the realm of thought.* The intellectuals of the age were dominated by the past. The heritage of Greece was still a treasured possession, but amid the competing systems of thought (many of them half-philosophy, half-superstition) and the popular religions of the time, Christianity was to gain the ascendancy because it was to prove itself 'the most congenial to the thought-out life.' Men may weary of ideas, they may seek to run away from thought by getting on with the job of earning a living, or, like the Romans themselves, with the task of administering an empire, of keeping roads in repair, of collecting taxes and providing some sort of law and order. To substitute action, even worth-while action, for thought, is an old escapism of the human mind. But the deep questions of thought will not finally be stifled. 'The unexamined life,' says Plato, 'is the unlivable life for a man.' The human mind is unsatisfied with 'bits and pieces,' it seeks at least a clue to unity, a glimpse of wholeness. It desires a view of life which gives meaning and purpose to existence.

Paul was unashamed of the gospel because he knew that Christianity supplied that need of man. It spoke of God in terms of Jesus, and by giving reality to God, it likewise gave reality to life and inspired purposeful thinking. Let us never forget that Christ won some of the finest minds of the ancient world. The gospel stimulated thought, encouraged the questing mind of man, and of all religions that of the Carpenter of Nazareth, one of whose own characteristic sayings—'What think ye?'—was the most conducive to the thought-out life. This evangelist was not ashamed when he took his gospel into the realm of thought.

2. In the second place *St. Paul was unashamed of the gospel when he compared it with the ethical systems,* and, still more, with the practical morality of his day. If Christianity out-thought the pagan world, it also out-lived it. Nowhere was the distinction between the three sets in society more evident than in the realm of morals. The best and the worst contended for the allegiance of the unthinking masses in the realm of morality.

In all ages there is the best, the truly élite, who in Paul's phrase 'do by nature the things of the law.' They are the artists of living, for whom ugliness in life and morals is impossible because it would hurt. But if there is finally no thought-out life, if in the end of the day life's day is purposeless, then why be good? why struggle to attain above-the-average standards? why not live each moment as it flies?

> Gather ye rosebuds before they be withered!
> Let each one share in our proud revelry!

So reasoned the Epicurean philosophers, and, says the old Hebrew Wisdom, 'They were led astray.' Even man's best is no true standard; for if 'man is the measure of all things' one might quite well ask, 'which man?' Is not the sceptic sure in his scepticism that one man's meat is another man's poison?

So an unthought-out morality collapsed, as indeed it always must collapse, because every living morality depends upon the conviction that it is true to something fundamental in the universe. Such bed-rock morality was supplied by the Christian gospel. Paul had no need to be ashamed when it came to morals.

3. In the third place *St. Paul had no need to be ashamed of the gospel religiously.* Roman religion was strangely primitive and at best the Greeks could only hand on the mythology of their gods. Polytheism with its warring, passionate gods, made alas in man's own image, is poor spiritual diet for wayfaring men. Religion comes to consist in playing one god off against another, and who is to say which god at any moment may not gain the upper hand? On the other hand, a philosophy which regarded deity as abstract and unknowable is hardly a solution of the religious problem. You cannot worship the Unknowable any more than you can worship space-time.

It was here, in the realm of religion, that the gospel came into its own. Taking over the Hebrew idea of God as a living God, active in history and taking sides in life, the gospel came indeed as good news to a world which was spiritually homeless. It is a mistake to imagine that these

pagans were bright and full of the zest of living. Swinburne's lines—

> Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown grey from thy breath

are false. The inscriptions on pagan tombs bear witness to that.

The greyness is in the world without the gospel. That old pagan world had lost heart and hope; there was an underlying pessimism, for had not men climbed up to Olympus and found no gods there? To such men the gospel came as good news from a God of Love. Into the darkness of their minds there shone a light never seen on sea or land.

Not ashamed of the gospel. Men of the gospel could out-think, out-live, yea and when it came to it, they could out-die that pagan world. And to-day we have no need to be ashamed, for men of the gospel whose minds have been illumined by the Holy Spirit of God are out-thinking the barren humanistic philosophy of our age: men of the gospel whose hearts have been, Wesley fashion, 'strangely moved' by the vision of new life in Christ have themselves become 'new men' in Him. We should re-assess our faith in face of the world situation: see the faith again out-thinking and out-living our generally accepted standards: see it inspiring with a vision of God before which the darkness of life is dispelled and even the portals of death itself illumined as with resurrection light.

Ashamed of the gospel? Nay rather is it that to-day as yesterday we have a gospel of which no man need be ashamed as we face the problems of our own age.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

The Guest-Chamber

BY THE REVEREND GEORGE M. DRYBURGH, M.A., GLASGOW

'The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?'—Lk 22^{11}.

The nameless host to whom our Lord makes this request reminds us of the Unknown Warrior who lies buried in Westminster Abbey; he represents every soldier who gave his life. So every one of us is represented in this unknown, unnamed host.

If you knew that Christ was really coming to your house next week, you would want to be prepared. You would have everything cleaned and renewed. But I am also sure of this—you would soon realize that another kind of preparation is called for. *You* would want to be prepared. Your heart is the real guest-chamber. It is there He and you must meet. How, then, are we to make ready the guest-chamber of the heart?

Most of us have, like the commentators, regarded the true preparation as meaning the cleansing of the heart of all that is evil and the banishing of the clutter and restless din of worldly things, so that the guest-chamber should be a place of purity and peace. These are good thoughts and a true interpretation.

And yet, how difficult it is to carry through that preparation! The sheer experience of living loads my mind and heart with evil things and dispeace until at times a dark cloud of despair hangs over me, which bodes ill for the coming of such a One. Rather my cry must be—'I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof.'

Yet still He asks, 'Where is the guestchamber . . . ?,' and presses His request. And as we reflect upon His words and look over His ministry among such men and women as we are, we begin to see a strange new kind of preparation. Did ever He wait till any heart was pure, or free from care, or from sorrow or defeat, ere He drew near. 'They that are whole have no need of a physician,' He said and turned His steps to those who walked in shadows of defeat and shame. The very things you feel must keep Him away from you may be the very things that are to make your heart His guest-chamber. Look at some of them.

1. 'I want to be thoroughly used up when I die,' wrote Bernard Shaw, 'for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle for me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.' That is a thrilling gospel for the successful. But can every one 'rejoice in life for its own sake?' Let him come with me and visit an old person who lies year after year in a Home, a leg amputated, an eye removed and the other blind. And what about a young wife wrenched away from her first babe, a few months old, that she may enter a hospital because tuberculosis has attacked her? Need I give more examples from real life? Many hearts are shadowed by the sorrow of a deep and unrelieved disappointment. Perhaps you are among those who have stumbled upon misfortune and have silently joined the unnumbered legion of the weary and the baffled.

What I want to say to *you* is that that heart of yours is the guest-chamber He seeks. In all our afflictions He is afflicted. He who bore the crown of thorns on His brow, whose hands and feet were pierced, whose heart broke in an anguish of loneliness and misunderstanding—He it is who comes and quietly knocks at your door—'If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him.' I know no other who can so truly share with us the bread of

sorrows. Perhaps no other experience could so truly have prepared us to open the door for the coming of such a guest. He will be more to us now than He could ever have been before.

2. Ah! but you say, my trouble is different. My heart could never be His guest-chamber, it is too unclean. Sorrow is one thing, sin is another.

And yet, and yet—that story He told of the lost sheep and the shepherd leaving the ninety-nine that went not astray to go after it! And the nickname He got Himself because He made His friends among harlots and sinners and folk that most of us would not be seen talking to—the Friend of sinners! There was that lad among the tombs, and the woman at the well, and the man at the Pool of Bethesda, and the root of *their* trouble in every case was sin.

'Can you recapture the wonder of purity'?—it's your very own question put tellingly by Alastair Maclean.—'Can you bathe your spirit afresh in the waters of enthusiasm? Can you turn back and climb the mountain and feel the glorious air of truth and beauty blow through your soul?'

I may go back across the years long vanished,
I may resume my childhood, Lord, in Thee,
When in the shadow of Thy Cross are banished
All other shadows that encompass me.

Aye, these very things in your heart that you think must keep Him away may be the very things that bring Him to your door, the very things to make your heart His guest-chamber. There is only one condition—that you open the door to His knock. 'If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me.'

3. Finally, one word for those who have been called to pass through the valley of the shadow. God has taken away the light of our life at a stroke and our heart is anything but a guest-chamber. Can't we hear His knock between our sobs, hear it amid the silence of our grief? For He is the Man of Sorrows acquainted with grief. No, death and its shadow will not, can not keep Him away. It may be the very thing that in its strange way has prepared our heart to be His guest-chamber. When He comes through our opening door He will bring a wondrous comfort, for He will come from the land of light where loved ones dwell for evermore; and what a light will fill our heart!

Alastair Maclean tells of an old Highland fisherman who lay dying in one of the Western Isles. He longed to be gone from the tossing turmoil of the world. Heavily the leaden hours shambled by. The faint murmur of the sea came through the window. Now and again a smile lit his face as of one seeing a lovely dream. 'Look out,' he said to his wife, 'and tell me what the tide is like.' 'It flows,' she said. His eyes gleamed. 'And when it ebbs,' he cried, 'I'll be free. And I'll see the children again, and tell them the heart of you is still the same to them.' 'The children,' she whispered through her tears, 'the children: but are you sure?' For answer he lifted his wasted hand and touched her cheek and smiling with a lover's tenderness, 'My dearest heart, that is why I have to go.'

The very grief of your heart is what makes it His guest-chamber. He is at the door. His knock falls upon your ear. Lift the latch and He will be with you, with you never to depart again, filling your heart with the comfort you've longed for, aye and with a radiant hope that will shine undimmed till the night is past and the shadows flee away.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

The Motherhood of God

By the Reverend Robert Menzies, D.D., Glasgow

'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.'—Is 66[13].

The key words in this text are 'mother' and 'comfort.' So far as I know, this is the only place in Scripture where God is compared to a mother. The Bible is rich in the similes and metaphors it uses to describe the nature of God. Sometimes He is likened to a king, a judge, a father, a nurse, a husband; yet perhaps the comparison to a mother is the most suggestive of them all. One sometimes wonders why Jesus preferred the father symbol as a description of the character of God. Perhaps it was because He was speaking to Orientals, whose minds were dominated by complexes about male superiority. Even so He imports into His conception of God as Father most of the qualities and emotional suggestions which the word 'mother' carries with it. The word 'mother' represents the creative impulse at its deepest and richest level. It exhibits human nature in its most selfless and sacrificial form. 'Every time,' writes Martineau, 'a mother speaks to her children of God, she herself is the grandest object in their affection. It is by her power over them that God becomes venerable, by the purity of her eye that He becomes Holy, by the tenderness of her words He becomes dear.'

The other key word is 'comfort.' In our use of the word in this connexion we must get rid of the effeminate and sentimental associations which cling to it. The woollen type of comfort which merely enervates and debilitates has no part in it. It is more what the root word suggests, 'fort,' 'fortify,' 'fortitude.' In our Lord's use of the word, the Comforter is the 'Paraclete' which means 'one called alongside to help.' It carries

with it the suggestion not so much of shelter as adventure, not so much of protection as support, not so much of security as undergirding. 'As one whom a mother comforteth.'

(1) A mother comforts her son by girding on his armour to face the battle of life. To be sure there is a time when a child's chief need is security. As a tender plant needs stakes to support it till it is firmly rooted, so the tender life of childhood needs a measure of security to give it support and rootage. One of the greatest disservices we can tender young human saplings is to plant them in a home environment where parents are estranged from each other. But there is another danger equally serious and even more disastrous to a growing boy or girl, and that is to prolong the period of tutelage to responsible maturity. If the one creates the 'problem' child, the other creates the 'mother complex.' Tennyson in 'Gareth and Lynette' represents the mother Bellicent as committing precisely this blunder. She pleads with her boy to stay at home, to enjoy the chase, and avoid life's risks. He rightly and sturdily turns aside his mother's weak proposal.

> How can ye keep me tether'd to you—Shame.
> Man am I grown, a man's work must I do.
> Follow the deer? follow the Christ, the King,
> Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King—
> Else, wherefore born?

No true mother will countenance Bellicent's counsel. She will refuse to soften the fibre of her child's character, by bidding him decline the risks and shocks of life. Nay rather she will steel his will with her resolution, and send him forth to play a man's part in a man's world.

After this fashion God comforts His children. He refuses to offer them a soft option. His religion is not a dug-out where we can shelter when the bullets whistle. He comforts us as a true mother does. He calls us to stand on our feet, and be strong and undismayed. Why should we expect to live a sheltered life in a world like this, torn with strife? When God's trumpet is sounding, and His call is for warrior-saints, is it at all likely that He will pamper the men and women who are fighting His battles in the world? Our task is 'to speak true, right wrong, follow the King,' and this demands austerity. God's promise to us is not absence *from* trouble but support *in* trouble, not freedom from wounds and hurt but His healing Presence in the battles we have to fight. This is the only comfort we should ask.

(2) Again a mother comforts by the self-effacement of her love. A mother's love is the most selfless thing this world will ever know. It draws all its sanctions and nutriment from itself. It asks for no gifts or returns. There is nothing in it of the *quid pro quo* relationship. 'It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.' And it never fails. It certainly never seeks its own. Most people have heard of the famous trial of Madame Vaux at the Assizes at Maine-et-Loire. She was tried on the charge of murdering her husband. The chief witness for the Prosecution was her oldest son Jean. As the trial proceeded the jury became more and more unconvinced by his evidence, and in the end she was acquitted. The counsel for the Defence predicted 'that in a year's time this unnatural son will either confess his guilt or murder himself.' And so indeed it came to pass. Very quickly he turned seriously ill. The burden of his guilt so tortured him that he confessed to his mother that certain people who hated her had induced him to incriminate her, and to fake the evidence. During all that time in hospital his mother visited him every day, and never breathed to him a word of reproach. She blotted out of her memory the monstrous crime and remembered only that this weak, erring creature was her own boy.

Read your theology in the light of this mother's love. Surely God is not less but more than this. His is the 'love divine, all human love excelling.' Nay, as this writer reminds us, 'a mother may forget her sucking child' (such inhuman mothers are not unknown) but God always remains faithful. The self-effacement of His love is wonderful. How clearly this is exhibited in the story of the Prodigal Son. If Jesus had been addressing a Western audience, it would be the mother's love He would have substituted for the father's. The story has all the authentic marks of motherhood—respect for a son's liberty of choice, liberty to use his choice for well or ill, pain at the foolish use he makes of his freedom, patient belief in his better nature, refusal to despair of his ultimate moral recovery, encouragement to the first faint stirrings of his conscience, eagerness to meet him more than half-way, and the blotting out of all his past shame in the joy of his moral recovery. And from beginning to end there is no hint of the outrage done to himself by his son's unnatural behaviour, of the discredit he has brought on his name, or the shadow he has cast on the home: in short, there is no mention of what was due to himself in the way of reparation from his prodigal boy. Can you conceive of any comfort more complete, more reassuring, more bracing or more redemptive in its power than the knowledge that this, in point of fact, is the kind of God with whom we have to do?

(3) Again a mother comforts by the intimacy of her love. The tie that exists between a mother and her child is a quite unique and peculiar one. We sometimes say there is nobody like one's

mother, and it's quite true. There are ties between husbands and wives, between brothers and sisters, friend and friend. These may all be beautiful and enduring; but they lack the special degree of intimacy that exists between a mother and a child. A mother never grows away from her child. And, generally speaking, children, when they grow up, even although they travel into spheres of influence outwith the narrower interests of their early home, and move away from other ties, still hold as fast in later as in early years to this tie. Innumerable illustrations of the fastness and enduring nature of this bond are to be found amongst men in public life—for example, Macaulay, Harmsworth, Haldane, Barrie, Carlyle. 'Ah, Tom, Tom,' cries Carlyle, 'thou hast grown old and infirm, and things have turned out ill for thee, but from the grave of Ecclefechan Kirkyard yonder, comes your mother's voice, saying, "Trust in God and do the right," and that will I do though the heavens fall.'

Yet wonderful as a mother's influence is in its intimacy and self-identification with the object of its love, it pales before the splendour of God's love. Everything which lends intimacy to a mother's love to her child—its conception, birth, dependence, nurture, development—holds good of God's love to us, but in a deeper, closer sense. Has He not formed us at the beginning, 'when our substance was curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth,' and is He likely to forget us? Did He not fashion our being with cunning, loving skill, and will He cease to have a desire to the work of His hands? Has He not watched over us from our earliest days, cared for us, provided for us, and will He not perfect that which concerneth Him? Nay, when we soiled and botched His workmanship by our folly and sin, did He not save us by the blood of His Son, and renew us by His Spirit? By Creation, Providence, and redemption He is thrice bound to us, and nothing can sever that tie. Is there any comfort to be compared to this?

A lovely story has come to us out of the horror of the First World War. A fair-haired German boy was left wounded and unconscious on the stricken field of battle. His blood-stained lips kept muttering, 'mother, mother.' A badly wounded British Tommy crawled over to where his enemy lay. He took the boy into his arms and crooned 'It's all right, sonny, Mother is here.' That story illumines as by a Very light the darkness of the world's pain and tragedy. Bruised and mauled by life's hammer strokes, knocked out and undone, perhaps with the last darkness closing in, we can yet be assured that it is no rough British soldier but Eternal Love itself that is bending over us. 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.'

Contributions and Comments

A Hebraistic Construction in Colossians i. 19–22

THE construction in *v.*[21] is usually taken to be broken. 'Even with the reading *ἀποκατήλλαξεν* the construction is not quite regular, but with the probably correct reading, *ἀποκατηλλάγητε*, a violent break in the context is involved, since Paul begins with the second person as the object and suddenly makes it the subject' (Peake, in *Expositor's Greek Testament*). And so there is generally an easy-going adoption of the reading *ἀποκατήλλαξεν* which, according to Peake, was 'an alteration for the sake of smoothness,' and/or a resort to evasive paraphrase or a taking of *v.*[21b] as a parenthesis.

Let me suggest that here and elsewhere in these Epistles we do well to remember the late Archdeacon Charles' brilliant recourse to Hebraistic idiom, in particular the tendency of a Hebrew writer to resolve an expected participle or infinitive into a finite verb (*The Revelation of St. John*, i. p. cxliv f.). He quotes Driver in explanation. 'It is,' writes Driver (*Hebrew Tenses*, 163), 'a common custom with Hebrew writers, after employing a participle or infinitive, *to change the construction*, and if they wish to subjoin other verbs, which logically should be in the participle or infinitive as well, to pass to the use of the finite verb.' Charles found a dozen examples of this resolution in the Apocalypse—perhaps with the enthusiasm of a discoverer he found it occasionally where he should not have done so—and he pointed out that the idiom occurred elsewhere in the New Testament—in 2 Jn [8] and, significantly, in Col 1[20] (*op. cit.*, p. cxliv, footnote 1).

Here, in 1[21], the supposition of an anacoluthon can be eliminated if we are willing to recognize an instance of this Hebraistic habit. After the present participle *ὄντας* 'who were continuously' we should expect another participle *ἀποκατηλλαγέντες* 'who have been reconciled,' an aorist of indefinite past time to be rendered in English by the perfect, which is actually read by D* F G Lat (vt.) Goth. Iren. That is what the author or amanuensis was thinking, and what we should be thinking too. But he resolved that expected participle into a finite verb *ἀποκατηλλάγητε* B Hil. Ephr. 'you have been reconciled,' thereby bequeathing trouble to translators unacquainted with the Hebrew idiom.

With that in mind the passage, though rather verbose, is quite straightforward. It should be translated somewhat as follows :

> ' In Him (God) saw fit for all His fulness to settle and through Him to reconcile the totality of beings to Himself by making peace through the blood of His cross—through Him (I repeat) whether they are the (dwellers) on the earth or the (superhuman beings) in the heavens—(to reconcile) you also who formerly were continuously estranged (from God) and hostile in attitude amidst your evil deeds but who now have been reconciled by means of His human body through His death (the purpose of His reconciliation being) to present you consecrated, unblemished, and irreproachable before Him.'

Dover Centre, Ontario, Canada C. Clare Oke

The Apostolic Ministry

' It must be seriously doubted whether any communion ought to accept episcopacy without an agreed theory of its nature corresponding to its functions. In this matter the contributors to *The Apostolic Ministry* have right on their side.' So says Principal Vincent Taylor in his finely toned study of ' The Church and the Ministry ' in The Expository Times, lxii. 272 [June, 1951]. This, however, is going a long way. Are its consequences realized ? It may be questioned whether an agreed theory of its characteristic institutions or tenets is held by every competently minded member of any communion. Do all Methodists share the same view of the nature of Holy Writ, or all Presbyterians hold identical opinions on the rationale of the Atonement ? Yet they both find it possible to dwell together not inharmoniously in their respective denominations. It is notorious that Anglicans vary enormously among themselves in theological complexion, while yet inhabiting the same household of faith. Let us not make the path to unity more difficult than it must needs be.

But Dr. Taylor himself proposes such an allowed variety of internal views in his suggestion that the Free Churches might find it quite possible to agree to ' a form of episcopal ordination ' as representing the whole Church, provided it were mediated by bishops *and presbyters* [he italicizes the two latter words] acting in concert.' He had already recognized that the point at which Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals differ radically is regarding the exclusive authority of bishops to ordain to the Ministry. His ' integrated ' Church would contain advocates of each of these opinions; yet in practice they would live and work together.

If we insist on identity of belief concerning these theoretical matters, neither we nor our successors will ever see a united Christendom. Dr. Taylor's appeal to the agreement of New Testament scholars on the fact that the Apostolic Succession ' has no justification in the teaching of Scripture ' will not be responded to by those theologians who regard Tradition as authoritative also in the determination of Christian doctrine and Church practice. D. E. Auty

Castle Douglas

Foreign Quotations

May I make an appeal to those who write scholarly books, that when they quote from a foreign language they give the English translation of the passage. In books that have come under my notice recently I have found quotations in Latin, Greek, Italian, German, and French ; of the last, quotations extending to half a page. Presumably books written in English are meant to instruct English-speaking people, and of these not merely scholars but also ordinary intelligent readers. To assume that in general such readers can interpret other languages is frankly a silly assumption. If, on the other hand, it is desired to add instruction by the quotation, to use an unknown language is to defeat the desire. A familiar phrase is that ' it is impossible to express this in English.' If the writer cannot put it in English how can he expect ordinary people who know just their own language to gather anything from it. St. Paul's warning about the unknown tongue seems relevant. If you can't interpret a passage, leave it out ; but don't spoil the sequence of thought and writing by words from languages of which probably ninety per cent. of the readers know little or nothing.

Christ's College, Aberdeen A. W. Watt

πᾶς οὐ for οὐδείς, and Similar Usages

This idiom is often regarded as a Semitism (see Moulton and Howard, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, ii. 22, 433–4). Without going into the question whether its use in the New Testament is due to Semitic influence or not, I should like to add a few classical parallels to those that have been given by Moulton and Howard.

Aristophanes, *Birds*, 590 : εἶθ' οἱ κνῖπες καὶ φῆνες ἀεὶ τας συκᾶς οὐ κατέδονται.

Hyperides, *Oration* vi. 25 (I give the text as restored in the Budé edition) : φέρει γάρ [οὐδὲν] πᾶσαν εὐδαιμονίαν ἄνευ τῆς αὐτονομ[ία]ς.

Athenæus, iii. 101B : οἱ μέντοι ἀρχαῖοι πάντες πρὸ τοῦ δειπνεῖν οὐ παρέφερον.

Herodian, I. xiv. 7 : οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐλάνθανε τὰ πραττόμενα πάντας, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ αὐτὸς λανθάνειν ἤθελεν.

Procopius, III. xi. 4 : τὸ δὲ νῦν ἅπασι τοῦ ὀνόματος τούτου ἐπιβατεύειν οὐκ ἐν κωλύμῃ ἐστί.

Bedford G. M. Lee

An Approach to the Theology of Baptism

Some Comments on Mr. Flemington's Article

By the Reverend D. R. Griffiths, M.A., M.Th., South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff

Mr. Flemington's article in the September number of The Expository Times, entitled *An Approach to the Theology of Baptism*, was one which could not fail to win the gratitude of all readers for its lucid and incisive presentation of the main problems. There are, however, a number of controversial points in connexion with this subject, regarding which one can hardly expect immediate, or perhaps even ultimate, agreement. The following are some comments from the Baptist standpoint.

(1) Mr. Flemington lays considerable stress on baptism (as well as the Eucharist) as 'an outward and visible embodiment of the message of salvation.' 'In both we see the *kerygma* in action.' This emphasis seems to Baptists to call for the retention of a form of administering the rite which itself significantly and realistically re-enacts the supreme moments of Christian redemption, *i.e.*, the death and resurrection of Christ (and the believer's death and resurrection by identification with Him). In the more extended treatment which he was able to give in his book, *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, Mr. Flemington made a fruitful application of the categories of 'prophetic symbolism' to the baptism of John and to the Christian sacrament, admirably developing some suggestions made by Dr. Wheeler Robinson (in his contribution to *Old Testament Essays* [1927], entitled 'Prophetic Symbolism'), and making some independent observations of great interest. Had the limits of his subject permitted him to write more fully on its implications for the Christian sacraments, Dr. Wheeler Robinson would surely have stressed the aptness and impressiveness of baptism by immersion as a powerful 'acted symbol.' He hints at this perhaps in the passage in which he points out the difficulty of maintaining the modern antithesis between Protestant and Catholic conceptions in purely historical exegesis, giving the account of baptism in Ro 6 as an example of the blending of the 'declaratory' and 'effective' emphases. It is only fair to add that Mr. Flemington, in his article and more fully in his book, is intent on showing the close connexion between the outward rite and the spiritual reality underlying it.

(2) There has been a tendency in recent baptismal controversy to reduce the Baptist position to an insistence upon personal decision in religious experience. While the emphasis on believing response to the gospel as the prelude to baptism has always been prominent in their thought and constitutes a distinctive witness, to concentrate on this alone involves an unwarranted impoverishment of the significance of the sacrament for Baptists. They consider, as is suggested above, that their mode of administration is that which most effectively 'proclaims the Lord's death.' Thus Dr. Wheeler Robinson writes 'The confessional value of believers' baptism *by immersion* is that it becomes an "acted parable" (like the broken bread and the poured-out wine of the Communion Service) of the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection, which are the cardinal verities of evangelical faith and the historical basis of Christianity' (*The Life and Faith of the Baptists*, 90). The baptizand, therefore, in his submergence and rising, offers the beholders a portrayal of the decisive gospel events, in addition to making public his acceptance of the Christian faith. To adapt a phrase from Dr. Wheeler Robinson's essay on 'Prophetic Symbolism,' there is 'a nucleus of the given,' to which the believer's faith is a conscious response. There is no reason to suppose that the practice of believers' baptism entails failure to realize the priority of God's gracious will and our dependence upon His saving initiative. The decision to make one's profession of faith does not operate in a vacuum; it is a response to the objective and historic manifestation of God's redeeming love in Christ. Indeed it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance (Ro 2^4). As Dr. Karl Barth puts it, 'The teaching about free grace can be illustrated, if not so drastically, yet more completely and exactly, in free and responsible baptism' (*The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism* [Eng. Tr. by E. A. Payne], 52). While it is natural that controversial discussion should turn so largely around this question of subjective decision, there are other aspects of the matter which should not be forgotten. Baron von Hügel, in his assessment of the religious contribution of Protestant Nonconformity, exemplifies a widespread tendency to narrow down the issue in the way suggested. 'Religion is a Work of Man—a deliberate, lifelong, methodical renunciation and self-discipline. It is thus not only a gift and a faith, but also an effort and a labour. This is doubtless the deepest meaning of the insistence upon adult baptism' (*Essays and Addresses*, 1st ser., 247). It is doubtful if this can be regarded as a

satisfactory judgment, for while it brings into prominence the most distinctive element in believers' baptism (which it expresses in unduly 'humanistic' language), it does not do justice to the evangelical element, as we may call it (*i.e.*, the testimony to the historic gospel events). Baptists would apply to their own form of observance the claim which Mr. Flemington makes at the end of his article for infant baptism—that it is the best 'witness and embodiment' of the Divine act in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

(3) While thus emphasizing the objective as well as the subjective aspect of baptism, one may at the same time deplore the present tendency in some quarters so to stress the Divine initiative as to reduce the significance of human acceptance and decision almost to nullity (an extreme which Mr. Flemington carefully avoids). There is surely no need to make human responsibility appear ludicrously insignificant in order to magnify the sovereign greatness of God. As Barth puts it (and he will hardly be suspected of an over-riding concern for the dignity of man as over against God!), 'Baptism then is a picture in which man, it is true, is not the most important figure but is certainly the second most important' (*The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*, 14). The New Testament appears to maintain a significant balance in this connexion; for example, the warnings and appeals of Ro 6, He 6^{1-8}, which are in a baptismal context, imply the most solemn awareness of the significance of human responsibility throughout the Christian life.

(4) Mr. Flemington makes some interesting comments in his article with regard to the strongly corporate nature of New Testament Christianity as part of his argument in favour of infant baptism. In this connexion it needs to be remembered that believers' baptism is by no means devoid of corporate significance. It is not an event which begins and ends with a solitary individual. It is rather, for those who practise it, the gateway into the Church, and it contains within itself an implied definition of the Church as a fellowship of regenerate believers. This conception of the Church may, of course, prove unacceptable or appear to be naïve in the judgment of many critics (see, for example, 'Further Thoughts About Baptism' by the Rev. James Barr in the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, iv. 268 [September 1951], but there can be no question as to a doctrine of the Church being involved. Indeed Dr. Wheeler Robinson ventures to say 'The Baptist stands or falls by his conception of what the Church is; his plea for believers' baptism becomes a mere archaeological idiosyncrasy, if it be not the expression of the fundamental constitution of the Church' (*The Life and Faith of the Baptists*, 84). The Baptist position as expounded, for instance, in the book just cited, or in Dr. E. A. Payne's *The Fellowship of Believers*, does full justice to the corporate emphasis of the New Testament.

(5) A subsidiary point of detail brought under this general head by Mr. Flemington is the analogy between baptism and circumcision on the one hand and Jewish proselyte baptism on the other. It is true that in Col $2^{11.\ 12}$ Paul speaks of baptism as 'the Christian counterpart of Jewish circumcision' and the parallelism between the two is natural in so far as both were acts of initiation. Even so, there is a strong contrast drawn in the context between the two; the stress on faith (*v.* 12) in 'the higher circumcision' (as Bishop Lightfoot called it) is significant. One feels, in any case, that, taking the whole range of Pauline thought into account, the analogy between circumcision and baptism cannot be regarded as determinative. Even in Colossians (3^{11}), we have evidence that the apostle cannot think of 'circumcised and uncircumcised' in Christ, and the position maintained in 1 Co 7^{19} and Ga 6^{15} seems to be more characteristic than, say, that of Ro 2^{29} (though in view of what 'heart-circumcision' implies, the difference may be little more than one of terminology and presentation). It appears that, even where Paul uses the language of circumcision, he has so spiritualized and Christianized the conception that one cannot lay very much stress on its occurrence as establishing an analogy with the Jewish rite. As Dr. William Robinson puts it, 'With St. Paul any idea of circumcision which has passed over into Christianity is purely a spiritual one, and is in no way connected with a physical rite' (*Essays on Christian Unity*, 238). The same writer makes the point that circumcision was continued by Jewish Christians, 'and in no sense was Baptism supposed to take its place; and when these Jewish Christians wished to force the rite of circumcision on Gentiles, it is strange, if Baptism was regarded in any sense as taking the place of circumcision, that St. Paul should not have used this as an argument against the Judaisers' (*op. cit.*, 237). Dr. Robinson goes on to a brief discussion of Col $2^{11ff.}$ as only an apparent exception.

It seems true to say that arguments based on analogies between Christian baptism and both circumcision and proselyte baptism are highly precarious, though it is interesting to note that there is evidence that the latter acquired such a significance as an opportunity for instruction, that Rabbis of the late first century could argue whether it was not as important as circumcision in the reception of proselytes (see W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 121, and note the interesting suggestion on p. 129, 'in his catechizing of baptized Christians he [Paul] was following the

custom of Jewish Rabbis when they baptized proselytes'). In this connexion, however, Dr. E. A. Payne, discussing Professor Cullmann's recent work on Baptism in the New Testament, speaks of 'a strange by-passing of John's baptism, which has surely far more to do, as a foreshadowing and prelude, with Christian baptism than either circumcision or proselyte baptism' ('Professor Oscar Cullmann on Baptism' in *The Baptist Quarterly*, April, 1951).

Mr. Flemington argues, as those who support infant baptism must, for another service in years of discretion, for conscious committal to Christ and fuller reception of the gifts of the Spirit. From the Baptist point of view, it seems unfortunate that the richly suggestive act of baptism, with all its associations and undertones, cannot be reserved for such an occasion. Moreover, the disintegration of the original unity of the process of initiation is not without loss, as recent study of baptismal catechetical passages in the New Testament may show (see, for example, Philip Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism*, and W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 121–30).

Entre Nous

Talking to the Children

There is no harder art than that of talking to children from the pulpit and no art which so few people possess. In *Switch on for the News* (S.C.M.; 7s. 6d. net) the Rev. John G. Williams shows himself a supreme master of that art. It must be many a day since so entirely satisfactory a volume of children's addresses appeared—his talk for Lent has been reproduced in Virginibus Puerisque. The volume forms a selection of Broadcast Children's Hour Prayers given by Mr. Williams.

Mr. Williams is an adept at starting from the here and now to get to the there and then. He wants to speak about the necessity of obeying the rules. He starts from the scene in Charlie Chaplin's film 'Modern Times' when Charlie, fed up with the monotony of the conveyor belt, suddenly assaults the switchboard and reduces the factory to chaos. He goes on to what football would be like without any rules. He shows us a famous cellist delighting us because he has mastered the rules of the cello; and finally shows us Augustine telling men to 'love God and do as you like.'

Mr. Williams has an eye for the apt analogy. He talks of the habit of men of forgetting God except when they think they need Him and says that it is exactly like forgetting the captain of a liner—even shutting him up in a cabin—until the ship is nearly on the rocks. Men would never have been in the mess they are in if they had given the captain his place all the time.

Mr. Williams can flash a new light on an old passage. He knows well the traditional symbolic interpretations of the gifts of the Magi—gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, myrrh for one who was about to die. But he suggests very beautifully that these gifts of the Magi were none other than the tools and furnishings of their trade and profession as astrologers and magicians and that they were taking their day's work and offering it to the King.

Mr. Williams is not afraid to tackle the most fundamental theological problems. He wants to find something to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity. He was in the unbroken expanse of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, one day. It suddenly struck him that you could not possibly have that chapel without three dimensions —length, breadth, and height. Take any one of them away and you are left with absolutely nothing. Further, there is no part of the chapel which is not part of its length, and which is not equally part of its breadth and height. 'The length is the whole space, the breadth is the whole space, and the height is the whole space; and yet there are not three spaces but one.' Herein is help indeed to understand.

Here is the most practical ethical teaching. Mr. Williams says that few will think of stealing but, 'What about cribbing some one else's work at school and getting the credit for it? What about the fellow who wastes his time at work and does a rotten job and then pockets his week's pay without batting an eyelid? What about the shopkeeper who gives short weight and charges full price for it? Or the charwoman who never sweeps under the mat or only dusts the parts that show?' Here religion is brought face to face with life.

These sermons are magnificent teaching. They take the greatest truths and clothe them in language that a boy can understand. They take the Christian faith and apply it to the boy's and the girl's world. If a man publishes a book of sermons no doubt he will count it a compliment if others use them. This is a book for the preacher to buy. It will give him something to say to children and a way of saying it that will be of the greatest value.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

Saint Tikhon

When the day comes when Russia grows dissatisfied with material results and earth-bound prospects and seeks again for spiritual depth and riches, none can doubt that she will share the inspiration she is leaving exiles and foreigners to find in the records of her saints.

This conviction is fortified by the erudite study of Bishop Tikhon which has been undertaken after long research by the lady who is lecturer in Russian at Oxford—*Saint Tikhon Zadonsky*, by Miss Nadejda Gorodetzky (S.P.C.K.; 21s. net). He was born in 1724, and after a studious youth was rapidly promoted to positions of high responsibility in the Church, becoming Bishop at the age of thirty-seven. Seven years later he resigned and lived in monastic retirement till his death in 1783. He had become the object of widespread popular veneration during his life, and seventy-eight years after his death he was formally 'canonized.' This beautifully printed and scholarly volume might have been made smoother reading; but quite clearly there emerges a truly saintly figure, uniting, in some queer way understood by Russians, most contradictory elements — gentleness and vigour, humility and dignity, culture and naïveté, ecclesiastical formality and simplicity.

Western imagination must find it a strain to reach any realistic conception of the conditions under which Tikhon lived. A ruthless tyranny was driving the country into more modern ways, and, to the disgust of 'Old Believers'—who were just ignorant opponents of any change—was forcing much-needed reforms upon the Church. The Church itself had schools and seminaries producing a highly trained and cultivated clergy and an accepted ecclesiastical organization covering the land but the buildings were often in disrepair, and the local clergy commonly ill-paid and illiterate, drunken and despised. There was, however, a sufficient tradition and tincture of Christianity to uphold the sentiment that Tikhon was right in pleading and working for betterment.

It might seem that the only way by which the handsome, charming, studious young prelate could have impressed himself upon his contemporaries as a Christian leader would have been by a successful crusade against abuses in Church and State. Actually his reputation rested on character. Such was the Russian genius for patience and submission that while issuing streams of protests and rebukes he contrived to remain a man of peace outside controversies, and that his evasions were ignored and he commanded universal admiration and affection. He denounced impartially the selfish greed of the rich and the unruliness of the oppressed. To incompetent and degraded clergy he wrote most beautiful letters filled with simple, practical advice and earnest appeal, letters that would move and inspire any group of ministers in a 'retreat' to-day. He was, indeed, strenuously active in personal efforts to set things in order, but after six years of episcopal office, through ill-health or a sense of futility, he retired. His life thereafter had two aspects: one, that of a poor, humble monk of literary bent, issuing many devotional books, incessant in prayer and works of charity, fond of children; one, that of the venerable ex-Bishop with many liturgical privileges and the right to choice of quarters in any monastery he fancied.

One or two quotations will enable any one to understand why the Russian Church loved him. Here, first, is part of a prayer.

> Lead my soul out of prison and I shall confess Thy name.
> Break the chains that I may be free.
> Shine through the darkness that I may see Thy light.
> Give me feet to walk unto Thee, lips to speak of Thee, a heart to fear and love Thee.
> Teach me Thy ways, O Lord. For Thou art the way and the truth and the life.
> Give me Thy meekness and patience.
> Say but the word and all shall be for Thy word is an act
> I believe. Lord help Thou mine unbelief.

And here are two anecdotes.

'Tradition relates that Tikhon was discussing matters of faith with a "Voltarian." Having no further reply to Tikhon's argument, the flighty nobleman raised his voice, and suddenly struck Tikhon on the face. And Tikhon, himself such a hot-tempered person, fell on his knees and begged the man's forgiveness for having so exasperated him.'

At another time 'one Nikander kept looking at him with somewhat envious eyes: it seemed to him that everything had been given to the old man, including beauty, thick hair and beard, whereas Nikander himself had scarcely any. "Do not fret, man," Tikhon remarked, guessing his thoughts, "many a saint of God was saved though he was quite bald."'

R. W. STEWART

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